NATION

Docs, protesting RG Kar horror, begin hunger strike in Kolkata

≫ Page: 4 ≪

BUSINESS

Slower check-ins, longer queues amid IndiGo outage

≫ Page: 7 ≪

SPORTS

Mumbai wins Irani Cup after 27 years

≫ Page: 8 ≪

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DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

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Cong to win H'yana, INDIA may bag J&K: Exit polls

The results of the Haryana elections will be declared along with Jammu and Kashmir's on 8 October

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

Several exit polls on Saturday predicted a clear majority for Congress in Haryana and gave an edge to its alliance with the National Conference in Jammu and Kashmir, with the regional partner emerging as the single largest party.

'Dainik Bhaskar' predicted the Congress getting 44-54 seats and the BJP 15-29 seats in the 90-member Haryana Assembly. The C-Voter-India Today polls gave Congress 50-58 seats and the BJP 20-28 seats in Haryana, while the Republic Bharat-Matrize polls put the Congress tally even higher at 55-62 seats as against the BJP's 18-24.

Peoples' Pulse exit poll gave the Congress 49-60 seats and the BJP 20-32 seats in Haryana. Most exit polls pegged the INLD's tally higher than that of the JJP, while others were seen getting up to 10 seats

BJP has been in power in Haryana since 2014 with Manohar Lal Khattar as chief minister for over nine years. The BJP's second term in office in 2019 was in alliance with the JJP, with Dushyant Singh Chautala as deputy chief minister.

Congress is hoping to make a comeback in Haryana with former chief minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda leading the poll campaign.

In Jammu and Kashmir, the C-Voter-India Today survey put the National Conference-Congress alliance at 40-48 seats and the BJP at 27-32 seats in the 90-member assembly of the Union Territory.

BJP has been in power in Haryana since 2014 **PHOTO: PTI**

Elections were held in Jammu and Kashmir after a gap of 10 years and the bifurcation of the state into two union territories -- Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh -- in 2019.

In different polls, the PDP was seen winning between five and 12 seats, while others were also seen bagging four-16 seats. The results of the assembly elections will be announced on 8 October.

National Conference vice president Omar Abdullah, however, described the exit polls as "just time pass" even though the results are in favour of his party. "We are confident that BJP will emerge as the single largest party when the results are out on 8 October," he said. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

THE PREDICTION

Haryana | Seats: 90 | Target: 46

Source	Cong	BJP	JJP	Others
India Today	50-58	20-28	0-2	10-14
Times Now	50-64	22-32	1	8
Dainik Bhaskar	44-54	19-29	1	5-15
Republic Bharat	55-62	18-24	0-3	2-5
NDTV	54	27	1	8

PHOTO: PTI

J&K | Seats: 90 | Target: 46

Source	NC-Cong	BJP	PDP	Others
India Today	40-48	27-32	6-12	6-11
Times Now	31-36	28-30	5-7	8-16
Dainik Bhaskar	35-40	20-25	4-7	12-18
Republic Bharat	31-36	28-30	5-7	8-16
NDTV	42	27	7	14

61.19% cast vote in H'yana amid minor cases of clashes

CHANDIGARH, 5 OCT

Over 60 per cent polling was recorded in the Haryana Assembly elections on Saturday in which the ruling BJP is eyeing a third term and Congress seeking a comeback after a decade.

Figures available at 7pm showed the turnout was 61.19 per cent

A total of 1,031 candidates are in the fray, including 101 women and 464 Independent nominees. EC data available at 7pm showed Ambala recorded a turnout of 63.35, Bhiwani 63.06, Fatehabad 67.05, Hisar 64.79, Jhajjar 60.52, Jind 66.02, Kaithal 62.53, Karnal 60.42, Kurukshetra 65.55, Mahendragarh 65.76, Nuh 68.28, Palwal 67.69, Rewari 60.91, Rohtak 61.59, Sirsa 65.37 and Yamunanagar 67.93.

However, districts like Gurgaon reported lesser poll percentage.

Haryana Jan Sevak Party nominee from Meham Balraj Kundu accused former MLA Anand Singh Dangi of assaulting him and his assistant at a booth. In Nuh, there was a clash among supporters of Congress' sitting MLA from Punhana and Independent candidate Rahish Khan, which left three injured.

On Panipat's Nohra village, police said they had received information of a fight at polling booth resulting in serious injury to one person, who had to be hospitalised.

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Saini, who is contesting from Ladwa, cast his vote in his native village Mirza. He attacked Congress, saying it has been regularly insulting the Dalits. Congress stalwarts Hooda, Kumari Selja and Randeep Singh Surjewala, who also exercised their right to vote, said their party would form the next government.

Congress high command will take the call on the next chief minister after the party wins the polls, they added. *—PTI*

> **We want to work in all areas in the coming five years. Today is the day of change, today is the day to awaken new hope. I appeal to the people of Haryana to come out of their homes and recognise their power**
> -Vinesh Phogat, Congress candidate and Olympic wrestler

India tests short-range air defence missiles

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

India conducted three successful flight tests of a very short-range air defence missile system at Rajasthan's Pokhran firing ranges. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday congratulated the Defence Research and Development Organisation and the Indian Army for the flight tests of the fourth-generation VSHORADS (Very Short-Range Air Defence System) missiles. VSHORADS is a man-portable air defence system designed and developed indigenously by Research Centre Imarat (RCI) in collaboration with DRDO. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

AAP Minister falls at BJP MLA's feet to seek LG's nod

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

Delhi Chief Minister Atishi, accompanied by BJP MLAs, on Saturday met Lt Governor VK Saxena and submitted a cabinet note to reinstate the bus marshals but it turned out to be a brief moment of thaw as AAP leaders soon accused the BJP of "betrayal" on the issue. In a dramatic sequence of events, Delhi minister Saurabh Bharadwaj laid at BJP MLA Vijender Gupta's feet, requesting him to accompany AAP leaders to the LG's residence to seek Saxena's approval on the reinstatement of bus marshals, while the chief minister left her car and sat in the BJP leader's car. After the MLAs of both parties reached Saxena's house, AAP leaders accused the BJP MLAs of not asking him to sign the cabinet note, and held a protest outside the LG's house. They were subsequently detained by the police. *—PTI*

Israel expands bombardment in Lebanon as thousands flee

TEL AVIV, 5 OCT

Israel expanded its bombardment in Lebanon on Saturday, hitting Beirut's southern suburbs with a dozen airstrikes and striking a Palestinian refugee camp deep in the north for the first time as it targeted both Hezbollah and Hamas fighters.

Tens of thousands of people in Lebanon, including Palestinian refugees, continued to flee the widening conflict in the region, while rallies were held around the world marking the approaching anniversary of the start of the war in Gaza.

At least six people were killed in more than a dozen Israeli airstrikes overnight and into Saturday, according to National News Agency, Lebanon's official news agency. The Israeli military said special forces were carrying out targeted ground raids against Hezbollah infrastructure in southern Lebanon, destroying missiles, launchpads, watchtowers and weapons storage facilities.

The military said troops also dismantled tunnel shafts that Hezbollah used to approach the Israeli border.

Some 1,400 Lebanese, including Hezbollah fighters and civilians, have been killed and some 1.2 million driven from their homes since Israel escalated its strikes in late September aiming to cripple Hezbollah and push it away from the countries' shared border.

Also on Saturday, Palestinian medical officials say Israeli strikes in northern and central Gaza early Saturday have killed at least 9 people, including two children.

One strike hit a group of people in the northern town of Beit Hanoun, killing at least five people, including two children. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 6

Smoke rises following Israeli bombardment in southern Lebanon as seen from northern Israel, Saturday **PHOTO: AP/PTI**

WAR WATCH MIDDLE EAST

> **Conflict in West Asia is a cause of great concern as shipping and insurance rates, and oil prices have gone up . Day before yesterday the markets tanked after the Iranian attack**
> -S Jaishankar, EAM

POLICE INACTION ALLEGED

WB girl returning home from tuition raped & murdered

KOLKATA, 5 OCT

The body of a 10-year-old girl, allegedly raped and murdered, was found in West Bengal's South 24 Parganas district on Saturday after which locals torched a police outpost and vadalised vehicles parked there, a senior officer said.

The girl was allegedly kidnapped, raped and murdered on her way back home after attending a tuition class on Friday.

Villagers said the minor had been missing since Friday and the police "did not act on their complaint immediately".

As the body of the girl was recovered by locals from marshy land in Jaynagar area early this morning, a mob torched the Mahismari police outpost and pelted the policemen with stones.

They also vandalised several vehicles parked outside the outpost and the policemen were forced to leave the premises, a senior officer said.

A huge police force was sent to the area and tear gas shells were fired to quell the mob which tried to confine the SDPO and other senior personnel at the spot.

"The family members of the girl lodged an FIR at the Mahismari outpost in the area but the police did not act on the complaint immediately," a local claimed.

The police responded in the "same manner" as they did after the body of a woman doctor was found at R G Kar hospital in August, another villager said. The police, however, said the action was taken immediately after the complaint was received and an accused was arrested in connection with the alleged rape and murder of the girl. "After lodging of FIR at 9 pm on Friday, the police swung into action and arrested an accused," the official added. Meanwhile, Kultali TMC MLA Ganesh Mondal was chased away by the villagers when he went to the spot to pacify the locals who accused him of supporting the "police". *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

NIA ARRESTS ALLEGED TERROR OPERATIVE

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

In a massive pan-India crackdown against terrorists' outfit Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), the NIA on Saturday conducted searches at 26 locations in five states and arrested one person and questioned several suspects involved in motivating youth into committing violent terror attacks across the country, according to an official statement.

Sheikh Sultan Salah Uddin Ayubi alias Ayubi was taken into custody after searches at 26 locations in Assam, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi and Jammu and Kashmir, it said.

The accused was arrested on account of his incriminatory role in the conspiracy case, said the statement issued by the National Investigation Agency (NIA).

He will be produced before the NIA special court, Patiala House, New Delhi, it added.

The suspects were engaged in radicalising individuals associated with Pakistan-based JeM and were engaged in disseminating terrorist related propaganda, and "radicalising and recruiting youth into the Jamaat outfit" inspired by it, it said. *—PTI*

PM launches projects worth ₹23,000 crore in Maharashtra

WASHIM, 5 OCT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday launched Rs 23,300 crore initiatives related to agriculture and animal husbandry sectors at Washim in Maharashtra.

Modi, who is on a one-day visit to Maharashtra, arrived at the Nanded airport in the morning, from where he was flown to Washim in a helicopter. In Washim, he offered prayers at the Jagdamba Mata temple in Poharadevi.

He later paid tributes to Sant Sevalal Maharaj and Sant Ramrao Maharaj at their 'samadhis' (memorials) in Poharadevi.

The Primie Minister then inaugurated Banjara Virasat Museum, celebrating the rich heritage of Banjara community. During an event held later, Modi disbursed PM-KISAN Samman Nidhi's 18th instalment of Rs 20,000 crore to around 9.4 crore farmers.

Narendra Modi **PHOTO: PTI**

He also laid the foundation stones of various initiatives of over Rs 32,800 crore including the Thane Integral Ring Metro Rail Project and Elevated Eastern Freeway Extension.

In a major push to boost urban mobility in the region, the prime minister inaugurated the BKC to Aarey JVLR section of Mumbai Metro Line 3 costing around Rs 14,120 crore. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

PROTEST IN STATES

Row over Hindu seer's remarks on Prophet

GHAZIABAD/AMRAVATI, 5 OCT

Controversial priest Yati Narsinghanand has been booked in another hate speech case after he allegedly made objectionable remarks against Prophet Mohammed that sparked protests in the Ghaziabad district of Uttar Pradesh and other states.

His aides claimed on Saturday that he had been detained in Ghaziabad but there was no official word on it. A large crowd had gathered outside the Dasna Devi temple, where he presides, protesting against him on Friday after videos of his inflammatory remarks appeared online, following which security was stepped up around the premises. Police complaints were filed in several states including in Telangana where AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi on Saturday submitted a representation to Hyderabad police commissioner CV Anand demanding that a criminal case be registered against Narsinghanand.

Yati Narsinghanand **PHOTO: X**

An FIR was registered against the priest in Maharashtra's Amravati city, which saw violent protests against his remarks outside the Nagpuri Gate police station in which 21 police personnel were injured and 10 police vans were damaged during stone pelting by a mob on Friday night, according to officials. Over 1,200 people were booked. Narsinghanand has several cases against him, including for allegedly making a hate speech at a conclave in Haridwar in December 2021, and was out on bail. Heavy police deployment has been made outside the Dasna temple to avoid any untoward incident, the police said. An FIR has been lodged against 150 people on the complaint of Dasna police outpost in-charge sub-inspector Bhanu at Wave City police station over the protest outside the temple.

- Police complaints were filed in several states including in Telangana where AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi on Saturday submitted a representation to Hyderabad police commissioner.

The police have issued prohibitory orders under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) barring the assembly of five or more people in the district.

Prominent Muslim organisation Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind demanded the arrest of Narsinghanand and said that filing an FIR against him is "not enough".

Protest rallies were also organised by various Muslim organisations in Jammu and Rajouri districts of Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday. *—PTI*

COVERED UP

PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD

Shielded by plastic, people ride amid rain on Seshadri Road, Bengaluru, on Saturday

Illegal sand mining: 23 boats seized in M'luru

MANGALURU, 5 OCT

A team of officials from Department of Mining and Geology carried out a raid at an illegal sand mining site in Mangaluru taluk and seized sand and 23 boats used for mining, estimated to be worth Rs 46 lakh on Saturday. The owners of the boats did not carry valid papers and documents, and many people living in the area had complained of overexploitation of resources in Nethravati River at Valachhil, Maripalla and Pudu, among others, according to Assistant Commissioner of Mangaluru taluk Harshavardhan. The boats have been parked at Adyar Katte, closer to the police station. There are a more spots on Gurupur river within Mangaluru taluk that are also stated to be illegal sand mining hotspots, officials said. *—PTI*

Minister bats for reforms in agriculture sector

MYSURU, 5 OCT

Agriculture Minister N Cheluvarayaswamy on Saturday advised farmers to adopt latest technological tools and modern methods of agricultural practices as such measures will not only cut down their production costs but also increase their farm output. To promote mechanisation of agriculture activities in the State, the government has released Rs 1,000 crore for distributing machines and tools at subsidised prices besides providing another Rs 1,900 crore for crop insurance cover, Cheluvarayaswamy said after inaugurating Raitha Dasara and agriculture exhibition- cum-sale organised by Raitha Dasara Subcommittee at JK Grounds in the city. Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Sciences Minister K Venkatesh said his government is promoting the mechanisation of agriculture, besides creating marketing opportunities for farm products. Earlier, a procession of bullock carts was organised from Kote Anjaneya Swamy Temple to JK Grounds after passing through the main streets of the city. *—Salar News*

Won't resign on Oppn's false accusation, says CM

Siddaramaiah vows to present actual position before the people

RAICHUR, 5 OCT

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Saturday reiterated that he would not resign from his position based on the 'false accusations' of the Opposition parties.

He said he would present the actual position before the people of the state.

"If the Opposition parties demand (my) resignation based on false accusations, should I resign? We will reply to the false charges. We will tell the truth to the people," Siddaramaiah told reporters.

Meanwhile, he came down heavily on the Opposition BJP and the JD(S) for dragging his wife Parvathi BM in the MUDA case, who had never stepped into public life and stayed within her house. He also accused the Opposition of targeting him because they could not tolerate a person from a backward community in the Chief Minister's post.

Siddaramaiah *PHOTO: ANI*

- There is mounting pressure from the opposition parties on CM to resign after a special court ordered the Lokayukta police investigate him in the MUDA case

Reacting to a query on hectic political activities within Congress where Dalit and scheduled tribe leaders were meeting after the MUDA site allotment case came to light, Siddaramaiah said people are speculating unnecessarily.

"Ministers will discuss but should you speculate? People speculate when state Public Works Minister Satish Jarkiholi meets the AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge or Science and Technology Minister NS Boseraju meets some minister. In the past too such meetings took place and are still going on but why such speculations are gaining credence?" Siddaramaiah wondered.

On senior JD(S) MLA GT Deve Gowda backing him during the inauguration of Dasara celebrations in Mysuru, CM said he has only explained the truth.

There is mounting pressure from the opposition parties on Siddaramaiah to resign from his post after a special court ordered the Lokayukta police on 25 September to investigate him in the Mysore Urban site allotment case. *—PTI*

19 FIRs registered against HDK: KPCC spokesperson

MYSURU, 5 OCT

KPCC spokesperson M Lakshmana on Saturday said that 19 FIRs are pending against Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy. Speaking to reporters in Mysuru, he stated that the minister should behave responsibly. More than 10 criminal cases were filed against State BJP president BY Vijayendra and Opposition leader R Ashoka. More than 40 criminal cases were also filed against RTI activist Snehamayi Krishna

He also condemned Union Minister Prahalad Joshi for issuing baseless statements against the Chief Minister. *—Salar News*

'Asked CM to release caste census report'

KOPPAL, 5 OCT

Basavaraj Rayareddi, Economic Advisor to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, on Saturday called for the implementation of caste census in State and urged the CM to release the report.

"The State government has spent nearly Rs 165 crore to assess the social and educational status of the people of Karnataka. In 2018, Permanent Backward Classes Commission submitted the report to the government. Unfortunately, I was informed that the secretary of the commission had not signed the report, and therefore it was neither published nor accepted by the government. Subsequently, the Assembly term ended, and HD Kumaraswamy became the Chief Minister, but unfortunately, he did not release the report," Rayareddy said.

"I met the Chief Minister two days ago for a two-hour discussion, during which I urged him to accept, publish, and implement the report immediately. The CM responded by saying, 'We will look into it and take action,'" he added. Siddaramaiah had announced that a decision regarding the implementation of the caste census report would be made during a Cabinet meeting after discussion. *—ANI*

Basavaraj Rayaraddi *PHOTO: X*

I met the Chief Minister two days ago for a two-hour discussion, during which I urged him to accept, publish, and implement the report immediately.

-Basavaraj Rayareddi, CM's Economic Advisor

Case filed against Dinesh Gundu over Savarkar remarks

BENGALURU, 5 OCT

A Bajrang Dal leader and activist filed a complaint on Friday against Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao for his remarks on activist Veer Savarkar.

Tejas Gowda, the complainant, said the Health Minister should be more cautious with his language in public. "He holds a responsible position as the health minister, and whenever he addresses the media or speaks in public, he should be careful. His statement about Veer Savarkar was inappropriate. He claimed that Savarkar, despite being a Brahmin, consumed beef. I would like to ask Dinesh Gundu Rao: Do you have any proof that Savarkar consumed beef? Or, I ask directly, did Veer Savarkar appear in your dreams and admit it?" he said.

Dinesh Gundu Rao *PHOTO: ANI*

Gowda challenged the minister to an open discussion on Savarkar. "We are ready to discuss this openly instead of allowing such false allegations and rumours about Savarkar to spread. I urge you to focus on your portfolio and the health of the people," he added. On 2 October, during the launch of the Kannada version of 'Gandhi's Assassin: The Making of Nathuram Godse and His Idea of India', Rao said, "Savarkar was not opposed to cow slaughter. He was a Chitpavan Brahmin but a non-vegetarian. In that sense, he was a modernist. While his thinking was fundamentalist in some ways, he was also modern. Some even say he ate beef, but certainly, as a Brahmin, he consumed meat and openly advocated for it." *—ANI*

'Doubling of rly line from KIA to Yelahanka soon'

BENGALURU, 5 OCT

Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Saturday said the railway line from Bengaluru Airport to Yelahanka will be doubled to increase the traffic capacity.

He also said that he will work with Bengaluru Airport authorities to bring the railway station closer to the arrival and departure spots.

The minister, who was here to review the progress of redevelopment work of Bengaluru Cantonment railway station, said the railways will soon begin large-scale production of Amrit Bharat trains version 2.0 with improvements.

Regarding the Bengaluru Suburban Railway Project (BSRP), Vaishnaw said that both the corridors are coming up very fast. With the BSRP and Metro Rail, commuters will have different options, which will significantly increase the traffic capacity in Bengaluru, he said.

Regarding the recently launched NaMo Bharat Rapid Rail by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Vaishnaw said the railways is mulling to introduce these trains for short distances, such as Bengaluru to Mysuru and Bengaluru to Tumakuru. On redevelopment of Cantonment Railway Station, Vaishnaw said it is going well and almost an 18,000 square meters new area is being created.

According to him, parking will be underground, which will accommodate 250 cars and an equal number of two-wheelers. *—PTI*

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

HC STAYS ORDER ON OLA'S RELATIONSHIP WITH DRIVERS

BENGALURU, 5 OCT

Karnataka High Court has stayed a single judge verdict, which had classified the relationship between ANI Technologies Private Limited (Ola) and its drivers as that of employer-employee. The original ruling required Ola to address complaints of sexual harassment involving its drivers.

The interim order that stayed the original judgment was passed by a vacation bench consisting of Justice SR Krishna Kumar and Justice MG Uma, following an appeal by Ola against the judgment dated 30 September.

In the original order, the single judge had directed Ola and its Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) to pay a compensation of Rs 5.5 lakh to a woman who had filed a complaint of sexual harassment against an Ola driver. The court criticised Ola and its ICC for failing to take appropriate action.

The single judge had ruled that Ola's refusal to act on the complaint based on the claim that drivers are not employees under Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, was 'unjustified'. *—PTI*

'FREE PALESTINE'

People protest in solidarity with Palestine and against Israel's bombing in Gaza, at Freedom Park in Bengaluru on Saturday

PHOTOS: MOHAMMED ASAD

Make Kannada business language: CM

RAICHUR, 5 OCT

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Saturday gave a clarion call to the people of Karnataka to make Kannada their 'business language'.

Speaking at an event to celebrate 50 years of naming the erstwhile Mysuru state as Karnataka, the Chief Minister appealed to people to make Karnataka a Kannada state.

"All the people living here are Kannadigas. No matter what your home language is, the 'business language' should be Kannada. Kannada should be the main and first language in the state," he said.

All the people living here are Kannadigas. No matter what your home language is, the 'business language' should be Kannada. Kannada should be the main and first language in the State. Learn every language, but Kannada should be the official language in the State

-Siddaramaiah, Chief Minister

"Learn every language, but Kannada should be the official language in the state," he added.

- Dwelling on the Gokak agitation, which was related to granting Kannada the first language status in the state, he said the 'Kannada Kavalu Samiti' was formed to create an atmosphere for Kannada to prosper in Karnataka

Dwelling on the Gokak agitation, which was related to granting Kannada the first language status in the state, the Chief Minister said the 'Kannada Kavalu Samiti' was formed to create an atmosphere for Kannada to prosper in Karnataka. Later, the committee became the Kannada Development Authority, he explained.

Siddaramaiah asked people to respect all languages, learn as many languages as possible but never be generous to give up Kannada, the language of this land.

On the occasion, the Chief Minister felicitated senior Kannada activists and leaders of the Gokak agitation. *—PTI*

More Pak citizens will be arrested: HM

HUBBALLI, 5 OCT

Days after four people were arrested from Bengaluru Rural for allegedly possessing fake Indian passports, Home Minister G Parameshwara claimed that some more Pakistani people were staying here and they will also be arrested.

"They (Centre) have RAW, IB and other central agencies, they should keep an eye on these things. How they reached Bengaluru and got passports, shows the failure of Central agencies. When our police got information they did an excellent job by arresting them," Parameshwara said.

G Parameshwara *PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA*

Four foreign nationals who were living in India illegally were taken into custody by Bengaluru police from Jigani in rural Bengaluru on 29 September. The Home Minister questioned the intelligence agencies for not getting any information about them. "They have been in India for the last 10 years; they came to Bengaluru a year ago. If they have been here for 10 years, why did the intelligence agency not get the information? They went ahead with making fake passports, which will be done through a thorough inspection," Parameshwara said. He said police were investigating why they came here. Rural SP CK Baba said a case had been registered and an investigation was underway. *—ANI*

MYSURU ALL SET

Dasara: 40 couples take part in heritage tonga ride

MYSURU, 5 OCT

Attired in traditional dress, as many as 40 couples from across State took part in a heritage tonga ride organised by Department of Archaeology Museums and Heritage as part of Dasara celebrations in Mysuru on Saturday.

Braving drizzle, the couples of various ages took part in the ride in specially decorated tongas (horse-drawn carriages) from Rangacharlu Memorial Hall. Arriving from Shivamogga, Hassan, Mysuru, Bengaluru and elsewhere, couples wearing Mysore silk sarees, peta and Kodagu attire were the cynosure of the event.

They were taken for a ride in about 25 tongas covering Silver Jubilee Clock Tower Circle, Chamaraja Wadiyar Circle, KR Circle, Jagmohan Palace, Deputy Commissioner's Office, Field Marshal KM Cariappa Circle, Railway Station Circle, Ayurveda Circle, Irwin Road and returning to Town Hall. Before the ride, the couples were gifted with traditional bagina containing Mysuru jasmine flowers, Mysore Pak and Mysore betel leaves and other city-based products.

- Braving drizzle, the couples of various ages took part in the ride in specially decorated tongas (horse-drawn carriages) from Rangacharlu Memorial Hall

After flagging off the rally, Commissioner of the department A Devaraju said the department has been initiating measures for protecting heritage monuments as well as sensitising the public about the conservation of the heritage structures for future generations. *—Salar News*

PHOTO: HTTPS://IRISHOLIDAYS.COM/

Forces foil infiltration bid at LoC, kill 2 terrorists

SRINAGAR, 5 OCT

Two terrorists were killed as security forces foiled an infiltration bid along the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir's Kupwara district, the Indian Army said on Saturday. "Two terrorists have been eliminated by the security forces in the ongoing operation," the army's Srinagar-based Chinar Corps said. The Corps had earlier in a post on X said that a gun battle ensued when troops spotted suspicious activity in Kupwara 's Gugaldhar. The army said it has discovered war-like stores from the encounter zone which is still being searched. *—PTI*

NCP leader stabbed to death in Mumbai; case filed

MUMBAI, 5 OCT

A leader of the Ajit Pawar-led Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) was stabbed to death by unidentified persons in south Mumbai, police said on Saturday. Sachin Kurmi, 43, was attacked with sharp weapons in the MHADA colony area in Byculla late on Friday night, an official said. Kurmi was rushed to JJ Hospital, where he was declared dead. The body has been sent for post-mortem, he said. The official said two to three people were involved in the attack. The police are examining the CCTV footage from the area to ascertain the identity of the accused. A case has been registered under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita (BNS) Act, and teams have been formed for the investigation, he said. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Kerala BJP state chief acquitted in poll bribery case

KASARAGOD, 5 OCT

A Kerala court on Saturday discharged BJP State president K Surendran and five others from the Manjeshwaram election bribery case. Surendran and the others were discharged by Kasaragod Sessions Judge Sanu S Panicker. BJP chief's lawyer told reporters that the court said that prima facie the case would not stand. The detailed order is not yet available. Surendran was accused of intimidating his rival candidate to withdraw from the contest for the Manjeshwaram constituency in the 2021 Assembly polls. He was charged under provisions of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act which are non-bailable. *—PTI*

Venugopal trying to defame govt: Dubey to Birla

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

Public Accounts Committee member and BJP MP Nishikant Dubey has accused the panel's chairman and Congress member KC Venugopal of raking up non-existent issues to defame the central government and destabilise the country's financial structure and economy. Dubey wrote to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla against Venugopal for allegedly misusing his position, bypassing the PAC's remit and working as part of a "tool kit" to damage the economy after reports emerged that the committee may summon SEBI Chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch, who has faced allegations of professional impropriety from US-based firm Hindenburg Research. Dubey claimed that political motivations were guiding the committee's chairperson after the Congress was "compelled" by voters to sit in the opposition benches following the Lok Sabha polls. There was no immediate reaction from him. He also accused Venugopal of committing the "unconstitutional and disdainful act of announcing an inquiry against the SEBI Chief by the Committee. *—PTI*

Cong being run by urban Naxals: PM

Modi accused Congress of looting the poor

WASHIM, 5 OCT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday alleged that the Congress is being run by a "gang of urban Naxals", and asked people to unite to defeat the "dangerous agenda" of that party.

He also accused Congress of looting the poor and not improving their condition for its selfish politics.

"They (Congress) think that if we all unite, then their agenda to divide the country will fail," Modi said, addressing a rally in Washim district of Maharashtra after launching various projects.

"Congress only knows how to loot the poor and keep them poor for its selfish politics. It only knows how to divide people. We have to be alert and remain united. Congress is run by a gang of urban Naxals," he alleged.

Everyone can see how closely Congress stands with those people who do not harbour good intentions for India, Modi said.

"Drugs worth thousands of crores of rupees were seized in Delhi recently. A Congress leader is suspected to be the kingpin. Congress wants to contest elections from the money it gets by pushing the youth towards drugs," he said.

Modi alleged that Congress' thinking has been foreign from the very beginning.

"Like the British rule, this Congress family also does not consider Dalits, backward and tribals as their equals. They feel that India should be ruled by only one family. That is why they have always maintained a derogatory attitude towards the Banjara community," he said.

Modi asked people to beware of the Congress propaganda of false assurance of farm loan waiver.

When the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government was in power, it put a speed breaker in the work of the Poharadevi pilgrimage centre upgradation, which was started during the chief ministership of Devendra Fadnavis. But it has now been completed at a cost of Rs 700 crore, he said. *—PTI*

Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the launch of agricultural sector initiatives in Washim, Maharashtra, on Saturday **PHOTO: PTI**

RaGa: No use of Modi bowing before Shivaji

Rahul says removal of 50% quota cap must

KOLHAPUR, 5 OCT

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday said removing the existing 50 per cent cap on reservation is necessary to protect Constitution, and asserted that INDIA bloc will ensure the passage of laws to this effect in Parliament.

The Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha also attacked BJP-led government, saying there was no use of bowing before Shivaji Maharaj after "scaring people, destroying the Constitution and institutions in the country".

Holding a copy of the Constitution during an address in Kolhapur, Gandhi called it a symbol of Shivaji's ideas.

This is Gandhi's second visit to western Maharashtra in a month. He visited Sangli last month to unveil the statue of late Congress leader Patangrao Kadam. His party wrested the Kolhapur and Sangli Lok Sabha seats from Shiv Sena and BJP.

Speaking at 'Samvidhan Samman Sammelan' here, Gandhi said the Congress and the INDIA bloc, a coalition of over two dozen opposition parties, will also bring out laws to enable a caste-based census.

"We will ensure in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha that the 50 per cent cap on reservation is removed and no power can stop it. Removing this 50 per cent limit is necessary to protect the Constitution," he said.

Earlier, speaking at an event here, where he unveiled a statue of Shivaji, Gandhi alleged that the warrior king's statue collapsed in the state's Sindhudurg district as the intentions and ideology of those in power were wrong.

"There is no use of bowing before Shivaji Maharaj after scaring people, destroying the Constitution and institutions in the country," he said, apparently targeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who had apologised to Shivaji Maharaj and those hurt by the statue collapse.

"Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj is not just a name or a king. For us, he is our deity. Today, I bow my head at his feet and apologise to my deity," Modi said during his visit to Maharashtra. *—PTI*

Congress leader and LoP in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi speaks during 'Constitution Samman Sammelan', in Kolhapur, Maharashtra **PHOTO: PTI**

BJP flays Didi, cops over 9-year-old girl's rape in West Bengal

KOLKATA, 5 OCT

After the body of class 4th girl was found in a canal in Kutali, in West Bengal's South 24 Parganas district, Bharatiya Janata Party has launched another scathing attack on Mamata Banerjee-led government over the rising crime against women in the state.

Meanwhile, TMC MP from Jaynagar Pratima Mondal was greeted with a 'go back' slogan by a section of people when she went to Padmerhat Rural Hospital where the body of the girl was taken for autopsy.

BJP MLA Agnimitra Paul, former state minister and CPI(M) leader Kanti Ganguly and DYFI leader Meenakshi Mukherjee went to the hospital separately and got engaged in heated arguments with police officials when they wanted to meet the family of the deceased.

Paul demanded that the body of the girl be preserved and the autopsy be done at "a neutral hospital which will not be influenced by the ruling party".

She also demanded that a magisterial probe be ordered into the incident.

Mondal said she would stay at the hospital to meet the parents of the deceased and hear what they want.

As demanded by the BJP and the CPI (M), the body of the girl was finally taken to a morgue in Kolkata for subsequent autopsy at a hospital.

Expressing shock over the incident, Union Minister and West Bengal BJP president Sukanta Majumdar said, "A Class 4 girl was forcibly lifted, raped and murdered while returning from tuition. The women of Bengal are not safe. They are being killed even during Devi Paksha (the 15-day period heralding the advent of goddess Durga since Mahalaya)." *—PTI*

HARYANA VOTES

Clockwise from top left: Congress candidate from Julana constituency Vinesh Phogat and family after casting their votes at a polling station at Balali; Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini with BJP workers at Ladwa; Supporters of Congress and BJP clash, in Narnaud area of Hisar, BJP leader Naveen Jindal arrives at a polling station riding horse to cast his vote in Kurukshetra during Haryana Assembly polls, on Saturday **PHOTOS: PTI**

Electoral bonds scheme: SC rejects review plea

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

Supreme Court has dismissed a batch of pleas seeking review of its 15 February verdict, which had scrapped the Modi government's electoral bonds scheme of anonymous political funding.

A bench of Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justices Sanjiv Khanna, BR Gavai, JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra said there is no error apparent on the face of the record.

"Having perused the review petitions, there is no error apparent on the face of the record. No case for review under Order XLVII Rule 1 of the Supreme Court Rules 2013. The review petitions are, therefore, dismissed," the bench said in its order dated September 25 that was uploaded today.

The review pleas filed by advocate Mathews J Nedumpara and others contended that the matter related to the scheme falls in the exclusive domain of legislative and executive policy.

Holding that the 2018 electoral bond scheme was "violative" of the constitutional right to freedom of speech and expression and right to information, a five-judge Constitution bench had scrapped the scheme. *—PTI*

Not going to SCO for India-Pak ties talk: EAM

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Saturday that he is not going to Islamabad to discuss "India-Pakistan relations" but his visit is all about the multilateral event, which is the SCO Summit 2024, taking place in the neighboring country.

The minister said that he is traveling to Pakistan only to be a "good member of the SCO".

"Yes, I am scheduled to go to Pakistan in the middle of this month and that is for the meeting of the SCO --the heads of government meeting," Jaishankar said while delivering the Sardar Patel Lecture on Governance organized by IC Centre for Governance in New Delhi.

"I expect that there would be a lot of media interest because the very nature of the relationship is such and I think we will deal with it. But I do want to say it will be there for a multilateral event, I mean I am not going there to discuss India-Pakista relations. I am going there to be a good member of the SCO. Since I am a courteous and civil person, I will behave myself accordingly," he underlined.

The External Affairs Minister highlighted that the SCO Summit is taking place in Islamabad this time, because, similar to India, Pakistan too, is a recent member of the bloc.

On being asked about his planning before he heads to the summit, the EAM stated, "Of course, I am planning for it. In my business, you plan for everything that you are going to do, and for a lot of things that you are not going to do, and which could happen also, you plan for that as well."

On Friday, the MEA said that External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will be traveling to Pakistan to attend the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit scheduled to take place in October. *—PTI*

I am hopeful that they will be able to talk on every issue. Economic issues are very important for all of us, the world itself. And I am sure they will talk on bilateral matters also

- Farooq Abdullah, NC President

IN SOLIDARITY

TN Left party protesting for Samsung workers detained

CHENNAI, 5 OCT

Scores of the Left party members including their state leaders were detained here on Saturday when they held a demonstration without obtaining permission from the police, to express solidarity with the Samsung home appliance workers on protest since 9 September.

Communist Party of India state secretary R Mutharasan and CPI (M) state secretary K Balakrishnan who were among those detained by the police, sought the immediate intervention of Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin to resolve the strike by the Samsung workers.

PHOTO: ANI

They stressed that the protesting workers had a right to join a union. A senior police official said all those detained would be kept at a marriage hall in Nungambakkam and later released.

Meanwhile, Samsung India said the company was committed to resolving the issues including wages, benefits, and working conditions by negotiating with the workers directly.

The production at the factory which was impacted due to the strike earlier, has been normalised and the Korean electronic giant ensured that there was no disruption ahead of the festive season.

The average monthly salary of the full-time manufacturing workers at the Chennai plant is 1.8 times the average salary of similar workers employed at other companies in the region.

The spokesperson also clarified that the striking workers would not be paid for the duration of the illegal strike in accordance with the 'No Work, No Pay' policy. *—PTI*

Posters demand Bharat Ratna for Nitish in Patna

PATNA, 5 OCT

Posters demanding the highest civilian award Bharat Ratna for Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar were on Saturday put up by his Janata Dal (United) at several places in the State capital.

One suc poster was seen right next to the entrance gate of the JD(U) office at Birchand Patel Marg where, incidentally, the party supremo was attending its State executive meeting.

A senior party leader, speaking on condition of anonymity, said, "We cannot say that demand for Bharat Ratna is the JD(U)'s official stand. But deep within every JD(U) worker believes that Nitish Kumar deserves the highest honour".

Kumar is the longest-serving Chief Minister of the State, who has been in the highest seat of power since 2005, except for a few months when Jitan Ram Manjhi, now a Union minister, had occupied the post.

PHOTO: ANI

Kumar, had formerly enjoyed a successful stint as Union minister, with key portfolios like Agriculture and Railways, in the Atal Bihari Vajpayee cabinet. "Nitish Kumar is under pressure from the BJP to vacate his chair. The JD(U) meeting has been called to find a way out. The posters demanding Bharat Ratna are proof that the party is in disarray", claimed RJD spokesman Mrityunjay Tiwary. *—PTI*

NAIDU: DEVOTEES NOW COMPLIMENT LADDU QUALITY

TIRUPATI, 5 OCT

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Saturday said devotees visiting Lord Venkateswara temple on Tirumala hills have expressed satisfaction over the quality of 'laddu prasadam'.

Addressing media persons after inaugurating the Vakulaamatha centralised kitchen established by the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) on Tirumala hills, Naidu said besides setting up labs for checking the quality of ingredients used to make laddu prasadam, if required, the TTD may also consult IIT at Tirupati to take its suggestions on the processes at Tirumala. *—PTI*

Vadodara airport receives hoax bomb threat email

VADODARA, 5 OCT

Authorities at the Vadodara airport received a bomb threat email, which turned out to be a hoax after a thorough search of the premises, police said on Saturday. Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) deployed at Harni airport in Vadodara received the email on Friday, following which a search was carried out by the police, fire brigade, bomb disposal squad and dog squad, an official said. Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Panna Momaya said the email sent from the email id generalshiva76@rediffmail.com contained a list of airports, including Ahmedabad, Rajkot, and Bhuj in Gujarat, but did not specify the location of the bomb. "I have tickled their ego and have frustrated them! Hahahaha! Result? Boom, boom and bangs! Big big bangs!! Hohohohohoho! No stopping, no escape! Let the games begin! Jai Mahakal, Jai Ma Adishakti!," the email read.—*PTI*

2 J'khand youths killed after being 'hit' by police car

RAMGARH, 5 OCT

Two youths were killed after the motorcycle on which they were travelling was allegedly hit by a police patrolling vehicle in Jharkhand's Ramgarh district, a police officer said on Saturday. The incident took place in Gola police station area late on Friday night. The bodies have been sent for post-mortem examination, he said. Abhishek Prasad, officer-in-charge of Gola police station said that an FIR has been lodged against the driver of the patrolling vehicle on the basis of a written complaint filed by Tiru Manjhi, father of one of the deceased. He said that the deceased's father alleged in the complaint that the youths were hit by a police patrolling vehicle as a result of which they died. —*PTI*

JEE aspirant jumps to death from Lucknow high-rise

LUCKNOW, 5 OCT

A 17-year-old IIT-JEE aspirant died after jumping off the eighth floor of a high-rise in Lucknow on Saturday, police said. "At around 7.30 am, the security guard of Commerce House informed the Hazratganj police station that a youth has jumped off the building. The police immediately reached the spot and shifted the youth to the civil hospital where the doctors declared him dead," police said in a statement. The deceased has been identified as Aditya, a resident of Jankipuram area in Lucknow. CCCTV footage from the building are being scanned, the statement said, adding that the body has been sent for post-mortem. According to preliminary information, the youth climbed up to the top floor of Commerce House, where he took coaching, using the stairs meant for emergency service, and jumped off from there. —*PTI*

Jewels stolen from Jnanpith writer's house in Kerala

KOZHIKODE, 5 OCT

Gold and diamond ornaments worth lakhs of rupees was stolen from the house of legendary writer and Jnanpith laureate MT Vasudevan Nair in this district, police said on Saturday. A case was registered based on the complaint of the writer's wife on Friday. It is suspected that the crime took place between 22 and 30 September, police said quoting the complaint. A police officer said around 26 sovereigns of gold and diamond ornaments were found stolen. "Good chains, bangles, earrings and diamond studded earrings and lockets were stolen," he said. Besides the 91-year-old writer and his wife, some of their close relatives were also staying in the house. Investigation is on, police added. —*PTI*

Docs, protesting RG Kar horror, begin hunger strike in Kolkata

Docs claims police baton-charged them during a rally

Doctors during their sit-in over alleged police action against them during a rally over rape of in Kolkata, on Saturday **PHOTO: PTI**

KOLKATA, 5 OCT

Despite calling off their 'total cease work', agitating junior doctors in West Bengal continued their sit-in on Saturday and went on fast unto death in Kolkata, alleging that the police baton-charged a few of them during a rally to press for justice for the deceased woman medic of RG Kar Hospital.

The doctors claimed that their demands were not fulfilled by the West Bengal government.

The doctors had on Friday begun a sit-in at Dorina Crossing in Dharmatala, setting a 24-hour deadline for the state government to fulfil their demands as promised.

Braving the rain, they held the demonstration throughout the night.

The junior doctors called off their 'total cease work' at state-run medical colleges and hospitals around 8.30 pm on Friday but threatened to launch a hunger strike till death if their demands were not met by the West Bengal government within 24 hours. They also placed a huge clock at their demonstration site to keep a count of the time.

Medics from RG Kar medical college, alongside their peers from various hospitals, joined the protest.

The protesters emphasised that securing justice for the deceased woman medic remains their foremost priority. Among their nine demands, they are calling for the immediate removal of state Health Secretary NS Nigam, as well as accountability for the alleged administrative incompetence and corruption within the health department.

Other demands include the establishment of a centralised referral system for all hospitals and medical colleges in the state, the implementation of a bed vacancy monitoring system and the formation of task forces to ensure essential provisions for CCTV, on-call rooms, and washrooms at their workplaces. Furthermore, they are advocating increased police protection in hospitals, the recruitment of permanent women police personnel, and the swift filling of vacant positions for doctors, nurses, and other healthcare workers.

The junior doctors are also demanding an immediate inquiry into alleged corruption and lawlessness within the West Bengal Medical Council and the West Bengal Health Recruitment Board (WBHRB). —*PTI*

3 gangrape girl while restraing male friend

A teenage girl was allegedly raped by two people, whose accomplice restrained her male friend, on a deserted stretch on the outskirts of Gujarat's Vadodara. The survivor told the police that she had gone out to meet her childhood male friend at the city's Laxmipura area at around 11pm. "They were returning on a Scooty when at around midnight, five people on two-wheelers intercepted them on an isolated road," an official said. Two of them left after argument, while three others remained. Of these three, two individuals raped the teenage girl, while the third person restrained her male friend. —*PTI*

'WE'VE LOST PATIENCE'

Govt draws SC ire over delay in ration card to migrants

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

PHOTO: PTI

We have lost our patience, Supreme Court has said while expressing concern over delay by the states and Union Territories in providing ration card to the migrant workers.

A bench of Justices Sudhanshu Dhulia and Ahsanuddin Amanullah granted a final opportunity to the Centre, states and Union Territories (UTs) to take necessary steps in this regard by November 19.

Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the Centre, informed that only one ration card is issued per priority household under the Antyodaya Anna Yojana.

The top court was hearing a suo motu case registered in 2020 after taking cognisance of problems and miseries of the migrant labourers during Covid.

The top court, in 29 June, 2021 judgement and subsequent orders, had passed a slew of directions to the authorities asking them to undertake welfare measures, including giving ration cards to all migrant workers, who were distressed during the Covid pandemic, registered with the 'e-Shram' portal.

The 'e-Shram' is a comprehensive National Database of Unorganised Workers (NDUW) launched by the Union Ministry of Labour and Employment with a primary aim to facilitate delivery of welfare benefits and social security measures to unorganised sector workers across the country.

The top court, in the 2021 judgement, had termed as "unpardonable" the Centre's "apathy and lackadaisical attitude" towards creating NDUW and ordered its commencement by 31 July, 2021 so that all migrant workers are registered and welfare measures extended to them during Covid distress. —*PTI*

Cases shouldn't hinder man's opportunities abroad: HC

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

Mere pendency of a criminal case does not automatically disqualify a person from exercising his right to seek long-term opportunities abroad, the Delhi High Court has noted.

Noting that the rights and interests of the petitioner must be balanced with the authorities' obligation as a sovereign entity, the high court directed that a police clearance certificate (PCC) be issued to the man explicitly mentioning the pending criminal cases against him as well as the fact that he has complied with the Regional Provident Fund Commissioner's (RPFC) order by making the required deposit.

"While respondent No 1 -- the Ministry of External Affairs -- is correct to point out its obligation to provide accurate information to the foreign authorities, this responsibility does not extend to unjustly curtailing the petitioner's right to apply for a long-term visa," it said.

The petitioner, an Indian national with a valid passport, approached the court challenging the refusal by the authorities to issue him a PCC for applying the Start-up Visa Programme in Canada. The petitioner, along with his proprietary concern, was facing two FIRs registered with the Delhi Police in 2013, based on complaints lodged by officials of the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO), alleging that while he deducted provident fund contributions of Rs 7.48 lakh from the wages of employees working at DMRC and NPL sites, he failed to deposit the amount in accordance with the provisions of the Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act. —*PTI*

IN SHIMLA

Court orders razing 3 floors of disputed mosque

SHIMLA, 5 OCT

Hindu organisations protested against the unauthorised construction in the mosque and demanded demolition of the illegal storeys **PHOTO: PTI**

The Shimla Municipal Commissioner's court on Saturday ordered demolition of the top three "unauthorised" storeys of the disputed Sanjauli mosque here and gave two months' time to the Waqf Board and the mosque committee to execute its orders.

The court also ordered the Waqf Board and the committee to bear all the expenses of the demolition and scheduled the next hearing on December 21 regarding the two remaining floors (ground and first floor).

Hindu organisations have been protesting against the unauthorised construction in the mosque and demanding demolition of the illegal storeys.

On 11 September 11, people were injured during a protest.

A day later, the Muslim welfare committee had given a representation to the municipal corporation commissioner asking to seal an unauthorised portion of the mosque and said they will themselves demolish this unauthorised portion.

On Saturday, the court cited the committee's willingness to demolish the unauthorised portion and ordered demolition of the top three floors of the five-storey mosque.

Counsel for Waqf Board B S Thakur said the court has accepted the representation of the committee to demolish the "unauthorised" portion of the mosque and declined the plea of local citizens to become a third party in the case.

We do not have the detailed order yet, he added.

Talking to reporters, advocate Jagat Pal, who was representing the locals, gave a detailed account of status of the dispute since 2010 when a notice was given by the municipal commission for demolition of the construction of single storey of the mosque under construction and claimed that the orders were not implemented. Pal said the land belonged to the government and the Waqf Board had permitted the Muslims to construct the mosque but not on government land or land owned by some other party.

However, the Waqf Board had claimed they have all the papers of the land where the mosque was built. —*PTI*

Chhattisgarh Naxal encounter: Toll rises to 31

DANTEWADA, 5 OCT

PHOTO: PTI

The bodies of three more Naxalites were recovered on Saturday morning in Chhattisgarh's Bastar region, where a fierce encounter with security personnel took place a day ago, police said.

With this, the number of Naxalites killed in the gun battle with the security personnel on Friday has risen to 31, they said, adding that a search operation is still underway in the area.

On Friday, the gunfight broke out between security forces and Naxalites around 1am in a forest between Nendur and Thulthuli villages on Dantewada and Narayanpur inter-district border, where a joint team of District Reserve Guard (DRG) and Special Task Force (STF) was out on an anti-Naxal operation.

A 10-km motorcycle ride through fields and dirt track followed by a 12-km climb of a hilly terrain take one to the site of Chhattisgarh's most successful counter-insurgency operation that eliminated 31 Naxalites.

About 1,500 personnel covered this route as part of their 48-hour operation in the forest along Narayanpur and Dantewada to inflict a crushing blow to Maoists.

This was the highest number of fatalities suffered by Maoists in a single operation since the state's creation 24 years ago. —*PTI*

JUMBO PANICS DURING MOVIE SHOOT RUNS INTO FOREST

KOCHI, 5 OCT

A male elephant named Sadhu brought for a Telugu movie shoot panicked during the filming after another tusker bumped into it from behind and ran into the nearby forest near Kothamangalam here a day ago, forest officials said on Saturday.

The elephant was found more than 12 hours later from the forest, officials said.

The 57-year-old elephant, Puthuppally Sadhu, could not be found on Friday as the incident occurred close to evening and it was difficult to search for it in the forest due to bad visibility, a senior forest official said.

The tusker was given food and water and brought out of the forest safely, the official said. "There are no visible signs of any injury on the elephant and it appears to be healthy," the official said. —*PTI*

VHP assaults Muslim man for entering Navratri event

KANPUR, 5 OCT

PHOTO: PTI

A Muslim youth was allegedly beaten up by members of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and Bajrang Dal here at a Navratri-related event, police said on Saturday.

The incident happened on Friday at Lajpat Bhavan in Swaroop Nagar when private guards and volunteer staff were checking the visitors' identities to prevent any non-Hindus from entering the venue, they said.

Purported videos of the incident shared on social media showed a man being beaten up while being questioned about his religion.

Motijheel police outpost in-charge, Ravi Kumar, has lodged an FIR against unknown men for assaulting unidentified youngsters at the event, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Central) Dinesh Tirpathi said on Saturday.

Instructions have been issued to identify those were beaten up and call them to record their statements, the DCP said.

In a statement, Yuvraj Dwivedi, VHP's district secretary (Kanpur North), claimed to have carried out checks at 'garba' and 'dandia' venues during the ongoing Navratri festival in the city to prevent people from other religions from participating in the celebrations.

Despite being warned, several youngsters were spotted at the venue and they were forcibly stopped from getting entry into the event, he added. —*PTI*

MAN ACCUSED OF WIPING OUT AMETHI FAMILY SHOT IN LEG

AMETHI, 5 OCT

Police shot a 27-year-old man accused of gunning down an entire Dalit family in Amethi in his leg early Saturday while they were recovering the pistol used in the killing at his instance.

According to police, the incident happened when Sub-Inspector Madan Kumar Singh of Shivratanganj Police Station was taking possession of the pistol found near a canal track. Just when Singh was inspecting the pistol and its magazine, Chandan Verma, the accused, snatched Singh's gun from his holster and fired at him intending to kill him, police in a statement said.

Sunil Kumar, 35, a government school teacher, his 32-year-old wife Poonam, and the couple's two daughters, Drishti and Suni, aged six and one, were shot dead in the Ahorwa Bhawani area of Amethi. —*PTI*

FESTIVAL FOR ALL

Mutton biryani, pulao to be served to prisoners for Durga Pooja

KOLKATA, 5 OCT

Correctional home authorities in West Bengal have planned to serve mutton biryani, 'basanti pulao' and several other Bengali cuisines as a change on the menu for inmates during the ensuing Durga pooja to ensure that they do not feel left out of the festivities, an official said on Saturday.

The changed menu for inmates – both convicts and undertrials – for lunch and dinner would be effective from Sasthi (9 October) to Dashami (12 October), covering the beginning and end of Durga pooja, he said.

A decision was reached that the inmates, who work as cooks, would prepare the delicacies during the Durga pooja festivities.

The delicacies to tickle the taste buds of the inmates will consist of a wide range of items - 'Macher matha diye pui shak' (Malabar spinach with fish head), 'macher matha diye dal' (dal with fish head), 'luchi-cholar dal' (puri and Bengali chana dal), 'payesh' (Bengali porridge), chicken curry, 'alu potol chingri' (shrimp with pointed gourd and potato), mutton biryani with 'raita' (mixed curd) and 'basanti pulao' (yellow pulao), he said.

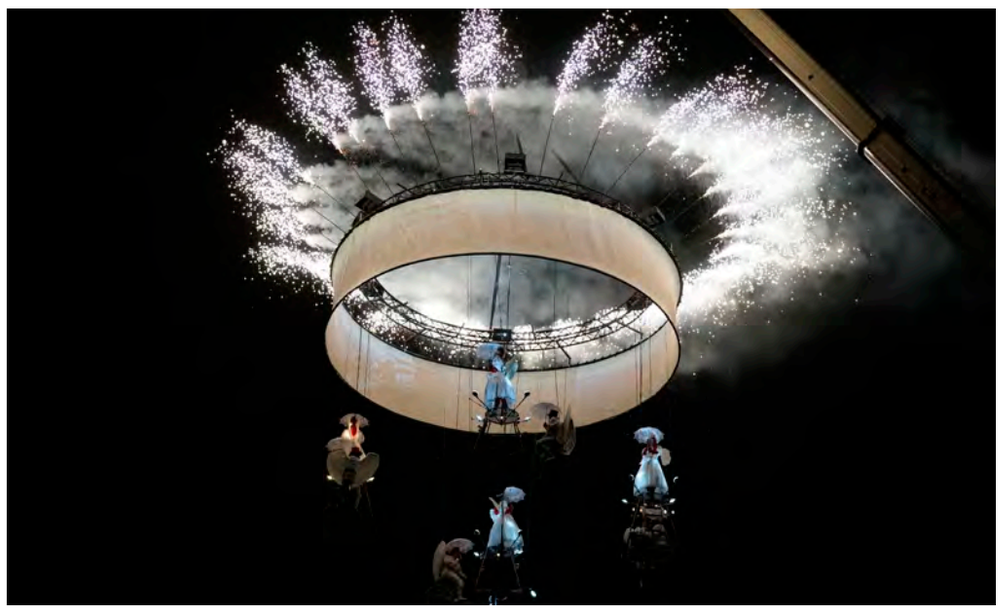
However, to respect the religious sentiment of the inmates, non-vegetarian food will not be served to everyone and the prisoners will be asked to choose items, the official said.

One of the city correctional homes, Presidency Jail, currently houses former state ministers Partha Chatterjee and Jyoti Priya Mallick and R G Kar Medical College and Hospital's ex-principal Sandip Ghosh. Chatterjee is accused of being involved in school recruitment scams and Mallick in irregularities in the public distribution system while Ghosh has been charged with tampering with evidence in the rape-murder of a woman doctor and a financial scam in the RG Kar hospital.

Altogether 26,994 men and 1,778 women are now lodged in 59 correctional homes in the state, another official said. PTI —*PTI*

Guwahati idol-makers wait for rains to stop to complete idols

An anxious Ratan Paul peeks towards the entrance of his smoke-filled workshop in Guwahati's Pandu area, hoping to catch a bright ray of sunlight without the raindrops cutting it out. Paul claims not to have witnessed such a long spell of incessant rains in his career of nearly 50 years as a sculptor of idols as he, like other idol-makers in Assam's largest city, pray to the heavens to clear the weather so that they can complete their Durga idols in time. "We are really worried about how to complete the idols," Paul told PTI. "We are using firewood, coal and even burners connected to LPG cylinders to dry the idols," he said. Blue tarpaulin sheets cover the front of all idol-making workshops in Pandu as the workers scurry to complete the idols, with rains refusing to stop giving them anxious time. —*PTI*



VISUAL TREAT

Belgium's Tol Theater company presents its play titled Pedaling to Heaven at the opening of the International Festival of Living Arts in Bogota, Colombia, ***PHOTO: PTI***

What's next for oil, gas prices amid war tensions?

Oil prices climbed this week as tensions in the West Asia escalated. Iran launched missiles at Israel and the Israelis threatened retaliation, raising the possibility of a disruption to the flow of oil from the region. A jump in oil prices automatically spurs fear of a spike in gas prices, but experts see reasons that may not happen.

Amid rising tensions in West Asia, US gas prices typically rise along with crude because the price of oil makes up half the cost of a gallon of gasoline ***PHOTO: PTI***

Familiar tensions, different times

Oil prices rose than USD 6 per barrel this week and prices at the pump moved higher as well. The average price for a gallon of gas rose 5 cents from last week. Any major escalation of tensions in the Middle East conjures up memories of the oil embargo that followed the start of the Yom Kippur war in 1973, which quadrupled oil prices.

However, the global supply of oil has been altered radically since the 1970s, with the US becoming the world's largest oil producer. Months of war between Israel and Hamas and Hezbollah, two Iranian proxies, did little to boost prices for OPEC and its 12 oil-producing nations. Only the possibility of a direct confrontation between Israel and Iran moved the needle.

Gasoline prices are up, but cheaper than last year

US gas prices typically rise along with crude because the price of oil makes up half the cost of a gallon of gasoline.

The national average for gas has risen to about USD 3.18 per gallon, according to AAA. But that's still 13 cents less than a month ago and 60 cents less than a year ago. The record national average high of USD 5 per gallon was reached in June 2022.

"Despite the threat of war and a hurricane season that is still percolating, domestic gasoline prices are edging lower," AAA spokesperson Andrew Gross said in a statement on Thursday. "There are now 18 states east of the Rockies with averages below USD 3 a gallon." AAA also estimates that approximately 1.2 million of its members live in households with one or more electric vehicles. The organisation believes that tepid gas demand and low oil costs will likely keep prices at gas pumps sliding.

It's the fundamentals

The long-term expectation is for oil prices to move lower, not higher. That's because the balance between supply and demand has tilted toward supply, a dynamic that typically weighs on oil prices.

In its most recent update on the energy markets, the International Energy Agency said demand for oil in the first half of this year rose by the smallest amount since 2020. Meanwhile, supplies have continued to increase and the OPEC+ alliance, made up of members of the producers cartel and allied countries including Russia, has said it plans to release more oil into the market starting in December.

"Geopolitical tensions have soared of late and yet fundamentals seem to be moving in the opposite direction with Iranian oil exports trending close to the highest level in years," Barclays analyst Amarpreet Singh said in a note to clients. "The jury is out on the primary driver of the geopolitical drift, but it warrants caution against taking a strong view on a sustained disruption."

State of Iran's oil sector

The country produces 3.99 million barrels per day, which is 4 per cent of the world total. By comparison, Saudi Arabia produces about 9 million barrels a day. Despite sanctions imposed by the West that have hampered production and export levels, Iran continues to find ways to maintain its oil sector, sometimes using creative methods like blending and re-labelling oil for sale to markets like China. As of the middle of this year, Iran was exporting about 2 million barrels of oil a day, up from 500,000 in 2020 but below the 2.5 million barrels it exported each day in 2018. Oil prices rose on Thursday after President Joe Biden said US and Israeli officials were discussing a possible Israeli strike on Iranian oil facilities.

What's next for oil prices?

Tom Kloza, global head of energy analysis with the Oil Price Information Service, believes oil prices are approaching a top, with US crude oil at USD 74.38 and Brent crude, the international benchmark, at USD 78.05. "Perhaps Brent may have a cup of coffee at USD 80 a barrel or higher," he wrote in an email, but the long-term outlook is for lower prices.

"As soon as things calm down, oil traders will concentrate on 2025 and 2025 looks very problematic for high prices with supply almost certainly outpacing demand by 500,000 to 1 million barrels a day," Kloza said.

—PTI

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

SALAR ساڈ

Antarctica turning green at a 'dramatic' rate

Antarctica is turning green "dramatically", with the trend accelerated by more than 30 per cent in recent years, compared to the past three decades, a new study has found.

Researchers found that vegetation cover across the Antarctic Peninsula increased more than tenfold -- from less than a square kilometre to almost 12 square kilometres -- between 1986 and 2021.

The researchers, including those at the University of Exeter, UK, used satellite data to estimate the "greening" rate of the Antarctic Peninsula in response to climate change.

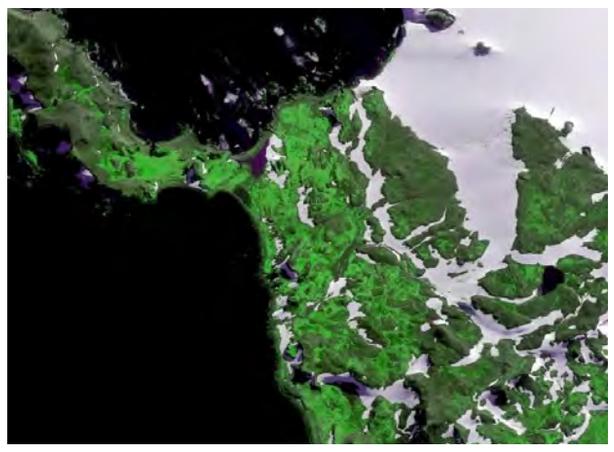
"This recent acceleration in the rate of change in vegetation cover (2016-2021) coincides with a marked decrease in sea-ice extent in Antarctica over the same period," the authors wrote in the study published in the journal Nature Geoscience.

The study provides evidence that a widespread greening trend, across the Antarctic Peninsula, is under way and accelerating, they said.

Antarctica has been shown to be warming faster than the global average, with extreme heat events becoming more common.

"The plants we find on the Antarctic Peninsula -- mostly mosses -- grow in perhaps the harshest conditions on Earth," corresponding author Thomas Roland, University of Exeter, said.

While only a tiny fraction of the landscape -- still largely dominated by snow, ice and rock -- is colonised by plant life, that tiny fraction has grown "dramatically", showing that even this vast and isolated 'wilderness' is affected by human-caused climate change, Roland said.



Antarctica has been shown to be warming faster, with extreme heat events becoming more common ***PHOTO: X***

- Researchers found that vegetation cover across the Antarctic Peninsula increased more than tenfold -- from less than a square kilometre to almost 12 square kilometres -- between 1986 and 2021

Corresponding author Oliver Bartlett, University of Hertfordshire, UK, said that as the climate warms and these plant ecosystems establish themselves more, it is likely that the greening will increase.

"Soil in Antarctica is mostly poor or non-existent, but this increase in plant life will add organic matter, and facilitate soil formation -- potentially paving the way for other plants to grow," Bartlett said.

Calling for further research to look into the processes that are driving the greening trend, the researchers said that the study raised serious concerns about the future of Antarctica."The sensitivity of the Antarctic Peninsula's vegetation to climate change is now clear and, under future (human-caused) warming, we could see fundamental changes to the biology and landscape of this iconic and vulnerable region," Roland said.

"In order to protect Antarctica, we must understand these changes and identify precisely what is causing them," he added.

—PTI

While only a tiny fraction of the landscape, still largely dominated by snow, ice and rock -- is colonised by plant life, that tiny fraction has grown dramatically ***PHOTO: UNIVERSITYOFCAMBRIDGE***

Travel could be best way to help defy premature ageing, says research

Forget about retinol night creams, researchers from Edith Cowan University (ECU) believe travel could be the best way to defy premature ageing.

For the first time, an interdisciplinary study has applied the theory of entropy to tourism, finding that travel could have positive health benefits, including slowing down the signs of ageing.

Entropy is classified as the general trend of the universe towards death and disorder. The entropy perspective suggests that tourism could trigger entropy changes, where positive experiences might mitigate entropy increase and enhance health, while negative experiences may contribute to entropy increase and compromise health.

"Ageing, as a process, is irreversible. While it can't be stopped, it can be slowed down," ECU PhD candidate Fangli Hu said.

Hu noted that positive travel experiences could enhance individuals' physical and mental wellness through exposure to novel environments, engagement in physical activities and social interaction, and the fostering of positive emotions. These potential benefits have been acknowledged through practices such as wellness tourism, health tourism, and yoga tourism.

"Tourism isn't just about leisure and recreation. It could also contribute to people's physical and mental health," Hu added.

- Travel encompasses physical activities such as hiking, climbing, walking, and cycling. Physical exertion can boost metabolism, energy expenditure, and material transformation

Travel therapy: Slowing down the clock

Travel therapy could serve as a groundbreaking health intervention when viewed through an entropy lens, she added. As an important aspect of the environment, positive travel experiences may help the body sustain a low-entropy state by modulating its four major systems.

Tourism typically exposes people to new surroundings and relaxing activities, and novel settings can stimulate stress responses and elevate metabolic rates, positively influencing metabolic activities and the body's self-organising capabilities. These contexts may also trigger an adaptive immune system response.

Tourism typically exposes people to new surroundings and relaxing activities, and novel settings can stimulate stress responses and elevate metabolic rates, positively influencing metabolic activities and the body's self-organising capabilities ***PHOTO: AI***

Hu said that this reaction improves the body's ability to perceive and defend itself against external threats.

"Put simply, the self-defence system becomes more resilient. Hormones conducive to tissue repair and regeneration may be released and promote the self-healing system's functioning."

"Leisurely travel activities might help alleviate chronic stress, dampen overactivation of the immune system, and encourage normal functioning of the self-defence system. Engaging in recreation potentially releases tension and fatigue in the muscles and joints. This relief helps maintain the body's metabolic balance and increases the anti–wear-and-tear system's effectiveness. Organs and tissues can then remain in a low-entropy state," Hu explained.

Travel encompasses physical activities such as hiking, climbing, walking, and cycling. Physical exertion can boost metabolism, energy expenditure, and material transformation, all of which help coordinate self-organising systems.

"Participating in these activities could enhance the body's immune function and self-defence capabilities, bolstering its hardiness to external risks. Physical exercise may also improve blood circulation, expedite nutrient transport, and aid waste elimination to collectively maintain an active self-healing system. Moderate exercise is beneficial to the bones, muscles, and joints in addition to supporting the body's anti–wear-and-tear system," Hu said. On the flip side, the research has pointed out that tourists could face challenges such as infectious diseases, accidents, injuries, violence, water and food safety issues, and concerns related to inappropriate tourism engagement.

"Conversely, tourism can involve negative experiences that potentially lead to health problems, paralleling the process of promoting entropy increase. A prominent example is the public health crisis of Covid-19."

—Courtesy, Journal of Travel Research

PHOTO: FREEPIK

12 killed in coordinated attacks in Mexico

MEXICO CITY, 5 OCT

Twelve people were killed in a series of coordinated and near-simultaneous attacks in the violence-wracked city of Salamanca, authorities in the central Mexican state of Guanajuato said on Friday. The victims were found on Thursday at multiple points across the refinery city of over 200,000. In at least one case, a banner signed by a drug cartel was left with some of the bodies. The massacre is the latest episode in a wave of violence in Salamanca, west of the state's capital Guanajuato, where gunmen killed four men and wounded two others in an attack at a drug rehabilitation centre late on Tuesday. Authorities said there are no clear suspects and they continue to investigate. *—PTI*

2 dead, 25 injured after migrant van crashes in Croatia

ZAGREB, 5 OCT

A van packed with migrants slid off the road and overturned in central Croatia early Saturday, killing two people and injuring 25, including some seriously, police and doctors said. The accident happened around 1am near Peklenica, some 100 kilometres southeast of Zagreb, the capital, said a police statement. A patrol spotted the van with German license plates overnight and started to follow it when the driver increased the speed, the statement said. After several kilometres, the officers saw the van overturned in a ditch by the road after it apparently hit a concrete bridge, a house and a power pole. Doctors told that nine were injured and were being treated in hospitals . They include people from Iraq, Turkiye and Syria, as well as Palestinians. *—PTI*

Amazon river tributary at lowest level in 122 years

MANAUS, 5 OCT

One of the Amazon river's main tributaries has dropped to its lowest level ever recorded, Brazil's geological service said on Friday, reflecting a severe drought that has devastated the Amazon rainforest and other parts of the country. The level of the Negro river at the port of Manaus was at 12.66 metres on Friday, as compared with a normal level of about 21 metres. It is the lowest since measurements started 122 years ago. The previous record low level was recorded last year, but toward the end of October. The Negro river's water level might drop even more in coming weeks based on forecasts for low rainfall in upstream regions, according to the geological service's predictions. *—PTI*

Singapore bids bye to 182-yr-old horse racing tradition

SINGAPORE, 5 OCT

Land-scarce Singapore bade farewell to a 182-year-old British-era tradition of horse racing on Saturday, as the iconic racecourse closed its doors to make way for housing and other development projects Thousands of racegoers turned out at the Kranji facility for one last hurrah on Oct 5, ahead of the closure of the Singapore Turf Club (STC), The Straits Times reported. Home of Singapore horse racing since 1842, the STC marked the end of its 182-year chapter in local history with a grand farewell featuring 10 races, culminating in the SGD 1.38 million Grand Singapore Gold Cup. The 124-hectare land will be returned to the government by March 2027 and is set to make way for housing and other development. About 10,000 guests, racegoers were expected for the event on 5 October. *—PTI*

HAMAS OFFICIAL KILLED IN ISRAELI STRIKE

The Israeli military says 9 soldiers have died in the conflict in southern Lebanon

JERUSALEM, 5 OCT

An Israeli strike on a refugee camp in north Lebanon has killed Hamas official **Saeed Atallah Ali** and his family, the militant group said Saturday.

Hamas said in a statement that the early Saturday strike on the Beddawi refugee camp struck the home of Saeed Atallah Ali, an official with Hamas's military wing, the Qassam Brigades. Ali's wife, Shaymaa Azzam, and their two daughters, Zeinab and Fatima — whom the statement described as children — were also killed in the attack. The early morning strike came a day after another Israeli airstrike cut off a main highway linking Lebanon with Syria, leaving two huge craters on either side of the road.

Smoke rises following Israeli bombardment in southern Lebanon as seen from northern Israel, on Saturday *PHOTO: PTI*

Israel began a ground incursion Tuesday into Lebanon against the Hezbollah militant group. The Israeli military said nine soldiers have died in the conflict in southern Lebanon.

Israel and Hezbollah have traded fire across the Lebanon border almost daily since the day after Hamas' cross-border attack on 7 October, 2023, which killed 1,200 Israelis and took 250 others hostage. Israel declared war on the Hamas militant group in the Gaza Strip in response. As the Israel-Hamas war reaches the one-year mark, more than 41,000 Palestinians have been killed in the territory, and just over half the dead have been women and children, according to local health officials.

Nearly 2,000 people have been killed in Lebanon since then, most of them since Sept. 23, according to the Lebanese Health Ministry. Beddawi camp is near the northern city of Tripoli. It was the first such strike on the camp in recent weeks that saw intensified exchanges between Israel and Hamas. Israel has killed several Hamas officials in Lebanon since the Israel-Hamas war began in October 2023. *—PTI*

250 Hezbollah terrorists eliminated in 4 days: Israel

JERUSALEM, 5 OCT

- Iran had said approximately 180 ballistic missiles were fired at Israel in response to Israeli assassinations of top Hamas, Hezbollah, and Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps leaders

Over 2000 military targets and around 250 Hezbollah terroritsts have been eliminated by Israel in the last four days, Israel Defence Forces (IDF) said on Friday.

The eliminated Hezbollah commanders included five battalion commanders, 10 company commanders and six platoon commanders.

IDF further stated that Israeli Air Force is also conducting preemptive strikes during these intelligence-based operations in southern Lebanon.

"Over the last 4 days, the IDF has eliminated 2,000+ military targets and 250 Hezbollah terrorists. Among them:- 5 battalion commanders- 10 company commanders- 6 platoon commanders. The Israeli Air Force is also conducting preemptive strikes during these intelligence-based operations in southern Lebanon," the IDF stated in a post on X.

Earlier in the day, sirens wailed across the northern and southern borders of Israel as the country faced a barrage of rockets entering its airspace.

In a post on the social media platform X, the Israeli Defence Forces shared an update stating that "for the first time in approx. 2 months, there are sirens sounding in southern Israel. "

The development comes days after Iran launched hundreds of missiles towards Israel on Tuesday.

Iran had said approximately 180 ballistic missiles were fired at Israel in response to Israeli assassinations of top Hamas, Hezbollah, and Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) leaders, Al Jazeera reported. The country is facing a war on two fronts, with Iran backed Hezbollah attacking the country from its northern side and the Hamas on the southern border of Israel.

—ANI

South Korea evacuates 97 people from Lebanon

SEOUL, 5 OCT

A military plane evacuating 97 people from Lebanon arrived in South Korea on Saturday. South Korea's Foreign Ministry said the group on the plane includes South Korean nationals and their family members. There are about 30 South Koreans left in Lebanon and 480 in Israel and 110 in Iran.

Final flight out of Lebanon for British nationals, says UK

London, 5 Oct

The UK government on Saturday confirmed its final charter plane to fly British nationals out of Lebanon. The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) said after a chartered flight leaves Beirut on Sunday, there are no more scheduled flights due to a decrease in demand.

'Hit Iran's nuclear sites first, says Trump

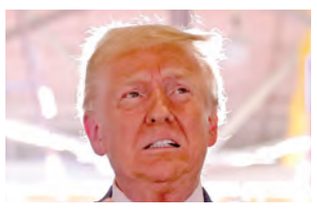
BUTLER, 5 OCT

Republican White House hopeful Donald Trump says he believes Israel should strike Iran's nuclear facilities in response to the Islamic Republic's recent missile barrage.

The former president, speaking at a campaign event in North Carolina, refers to a question posed to Democratic President Joe Biden this week about the possibility of Israel targeting Iran's nuclear program.

"They asked him, what do you think about Iran, would you hit Iran? And he goes, 'As long as they don't hit the nuclear stuff.' That's the thing you want to hit, right?" Trump tells a town hall style event in Fayetteville, near a major US military base.

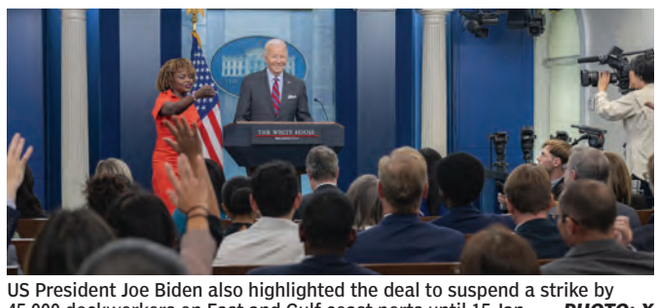
"I think he's got that one



Donald Trump *PHOTO: PTI*

wrong," Trump says, in response to a participant's question about the issue. "Isn't that what you're supposed to hit? I mean, it's the biggest risk we have, nuclear weapons. "When they asked him that question, the answer should have been, hit the nuclear first, and worry about the rest later," Trump adds.

"If they're going to do it, they're going to do it. But we'll find out whatever their plans are." *—Agencies*



US President Joe Biden also highlighted the deal to suspend a strike by 45,000 dockworkers on East and Gulf coast ports until 15 Jan *PHOTO: X*

Biden talks election, economy and West Asia tensions

WASHINGTON, 5 OCT

After 1,080 days as president, Joe Biden decided to pop in and take questions in the White House briefing room for the first time, striding in with a grin after a strong monthly jobs report and the temporary settlement of a strike by ports workers.

"I am confident it will be free and fair. I do not know whether it will be peaceful," Biden said

The president also highlighted the deal reached on Thursday to suspend a strike by 45,000 dockworkers on East and Gulf coast ports until 15 January, creating time to try to hash out a new contract.

Still, challenges remain for Biden as his final months as president involve the risk of a wider war in the Middle East.

Since Hamas attacked Israel nearly a year ago, Israel has retaliated by bombarding the Gaza region in ways that have raised human rights concerns, as well as killed Hezbollah leaders and launching airstrikes in Lebanon. On Tuesday, Iran fired at least 180 missiles into Israel and there are concerns about additional retaliation that could cause the conflict to deepen. *—PTI*

IN FRESH ENCOUNTER

6 Pakistan soldiers, 6 terrorists killed in Pakhtunkhwa province

PESHAWAR, 5 OCT

Six soldiers, including an officer, and as many terrorists were killed in a gunfight in Pakistan's restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, the military said on Saturday.

In a statement, the military's media wing Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said the exchange of fire took place on the night between 4 and 5 October at Spinwam area in North Waziristan district, bordering Afghanistan, during which six soldiers, including a Lieutenant Colonel, and "six Khwarij" were killed.

During the "intense fire exchange", 43-year-old Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Ali Shoukat, who was leading the operation against the terrorists, was killed along with five other soldiers, the statement said.

There has been an uptick in the incidents of terrorism in Pakistan since Taliban took over the government in Kabul in 2021 *PHOTO: X*

Meanwhile, the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) has claimed responsibility for the attack.

The TTP was set up as an umbrella group of several militant outfits in 2007. Pakistan has officially declared TTP as 'Fitna al-Khawarij' and the notification by the Interior Ministry emphasises the use of the term 'khariji' (outlawed) along with the names of such terrorists. The Pakistani government has repeatedly accused the TTP of operating from sanctuaries in Afghanistan. There has been an uptick in the incidents of terrorism in Pakistan since the Taliban took over the government in Kabul in 2021. *—PTI*

Army deployed in Islamabad amid PTI protests

ISLAMABAD, 5 OCT

Pakistan Army troops were on Saturday deployed here to ensure security as jailed former premier Imran Khan's party Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) moved forward with plans for a protest.

Mobilised under Article 245 of the Constitution, the army would remain in the city from 5-17 October to maintain law and order for the upcoming Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit. Pakistan is hosting the SCO summit on 15-16 October.

PTI is protesting for the release of its founder, Khan, while also expressing solidarity with the judiciary.

The authorities also imposed Section 144 the twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad to outlaw protest. *—PTI*

16 KILLED IN BOSNIA FLOODS, RESCUE OPS ON

JABLANICA, 5 OCT

Rescue teams on Saturday searched for those still missing after flash floods and landslides hit parts of Bosnia, killing at least 16 people and injuring scores more.

Construction machines worked to remove piles of rocks and debris covering the central town of Jablanica after the rainstorm early on Friday.

Huge quantities of rain fell in the area around Jablanica and nearby Konjic, causing sudden floods that broke into people's homes as they were sleeping.

Surging waters also triggered landslides that collapsed roads and hills, covering villages in mud Some houses were submerged up to their roofs. *—PTI*

Sri Lanka reaches debt restructuring agreement

COLOMBO, 5 OCT

- The IMF made external debt restructuring conditional to the USD 2.9 billion four-year facility clinched in March 2023 by then Ranil Wickremesinghe administration

Sri Lanka has reached a debt restructuring agreement with its sovereign bondholders, the government has said, marking a crucial step towards the cash-strapped island nation's economic recovery and strengthening.

In a statement on Friday, the Ministry of Finance said following the Agreement in Principle (AIP) reached with representatives of its international and local holders of International Sovereign Bonds (ISB) on 19 September, the Sri Lankan authorities have "now completed their consultations" with the country's "Official Creditor Committee (OCC) and the IMF (International Monetary Fund)". According to the statement, following the presidential elections on 21 September and the installation of a new government on 25 September, the Sri Lankan authorities reiterated their commitment to the debt restructuring plan. The new administration has endorsed the programme's debt targets and the AIP terms, with a focus on expediting the restructuring of ISBs in accordance with the agreed terms. The IMF made external debt restructuring conditional to the USD 2.9 billion four-year facility clinched in March 2023 by then Ranil Wickremesinghe administration. *—PTI*

Elon Musk *PHOTO: PTI*

X ATTEMPTS TO PAY FINE TO RESUME OPS IN BRAZIL

BRASILIA, 5 OCT

Brazil, home to more than 21 million users, suspended X after it failed to comply with court orders and pay fines.

The social media site X, formerly known as Twitter, has attempted to pay fines owed to the Brazilian government in a bid to resume services in the country.

But the Reuters news agency reported that Brazil's Supreme Court has yet to lift the site's suspension, saying the fees were deposited into the wrong bank account.

"The deposit of the amount of 28,600,000 reais [$5.24m] was not made correctly in the account linked to these proceedings," Supreme Court Justice Alexandre de Moraes said.

The announcement was the latest hiccup in an ongoing spat between X owner Elon Musk and the Brazilian government.

Earlier in the day, X had filed a request to resume operations in Brazil, on the basis that it had paid its fines.

The case has sparked debate over free speech and what steps can be taken to address the spread of false claims online.

The Supreme Court had requested the social media company take action to restrict accounts linked to misinformation and far-right figures accused of undermining Brazil's elections. *—Al Jazeera*

ON ALERT!

What is the deadly Marburg virus and where has it spread?

KIGALI, 5 OCT

Rwanda is fighting its first outbreak of the "highly virulent" Marburg virus which was first reported in late September.

As of Thursday, 11 people were reported to have died of the virus in Rwanda. The health minister announced the country will begin clinical trials of experimental vaccines and treatments.

The virus causes a haemorrhagic fever, which is a type of fever that can damage the walls of blood vessels, according to information from the Mayo Clinic. Other diseases which produce this type of fever include dengue and yellow fever.

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates the case fatality rate to be between 24 and 88 percent. On average, about half of all those who contract the virus die from it.

There are currently 36 confirmed cases of Marburg in Rwanda, with 25 people being cared for in isolation, according to the government's latest update. According to the WHO, on 30 September when there were 26 confirmed cases, 70 percent of the cases were in healthcare workers in two of the country's healthcare facilities, which were not named.

On 27 September, Rwanda's Ministry of Health confirmed the latest outbreak.

Courtesy, Al-Jazeera

WHAT IS THE MARBURG VIRUS?

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

- It belongs to the same family as Ebola (Filoviridae family, or filovirus).
- Considered even more severe than Ebola.

ORIGIN:
- First discovered in 1967 in Marburg, Germany, and Belgrade, Serbia.

SYMPTOMS:
- Fever
- Headache
- Muscle and joint pain
- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite
- Bleeding (internal and external)
- Gastrointestinal issues (like vomiting and diarrhea)

HOW IT SPREADS:
- Some get it from contact with fruit bats
- People can also catch it from direct contact with infected bodily fluids
- Contaminated surfaces (bedsheets or clothing)
- It is not airborne.

OUTBREAKS:
- The source of some outbreaks, like the one in Rwanda, remains unclear.

TREATMENTS:
- No approved vaccines or specific treatments

SEVERITY:
- Death can occur as quickly as eight or nine days after symptoms begin

PHOTO: PTI

Govt grants 1-year extension to RBI Deputy Governor

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

The government has extended the term of RBI Deputy Governor M Rajeshwar Rao for a period of one year, according to sources. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the re-appointment of Rao for a period of one year with effect from 9 October, 2024 or until further orders, sources said quoting a government order dated 4 October The ACC is headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Rao was appointed as RBI Deputy Governor in October 2020 for a period of three years. Rao was elevated as RBI executive director in November 2016. An economics graduate and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Cochin, Rao joined the central bank in 1984. As a career central banker, he has exposure to various aspects. *—PTI*

Dev Accelerator plans ₹125 cr IPO for office spaces

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

Dev Accelerator Ltd, which provides flexible office spaces, has filed a draft document with Sebi to launch its initial public offering (IPO) to raise around Rs 125 crore. Dev Accelerator (DevX) is promoted by listed entity Dev Information Technology Ltd. DevX's IPO is entirely a fresh issue of 2.47 crore equity shares (face value of Rs 2), with plans to list on both the NSE and BSE. The company proposes to utilise Rs 68.95 crore for "fit-outs" in the new centres and their security deposits. It proposes to use Rs 30 crore towards repayment and/or prepayment (in full or in part) of certain borrowings, according to the draft red herring prospectus (DRHP) filed with markets regulator SEBI. *—PTI*

Central govt to fund 65% of Chennai metro

CHENNAI, 5 OCT

With the Cabinet's recent approval, the Central Government will now finance about 65 Rs33,593 crore and an additional Rs7,425 crore in equity and subordinate debt. According to the Ministry of Finance, the remaining 35 per cent of the project costs will be covered by the State Government. The Ministry of Finance will engage with key bilateral and multilateral agencies, including the Japan International Cooperation Agency, Asian Development Bank, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, and New Development Bank, following the Union Cabinet's approval of Chennai Metro Rail Project Phase 2. The discussions will aim to renegotiate loan agreements to reflect the new funding structure- designating the loans as liabilities of the Central Government rather than the State Government, modifying the flow of loan funds so that they are directed from the agencies to the Central Government and then to CMRL. *—PTI*

AI will reshape economy & innovation: UBS

CHENNAI, 5 OCT

Analysts predict that artificial intelligence's (AI) influence will reshape the global economy, driving monumental growth and creating an ecosystem brimming with innovation and financial gains, according to the UBS report. This profound technological shift is expected to open doors for companies and investors, positioning AI at the forefront of global progress. Projections for 2027 reveal the massive revenue-generating potential across the AI sector. AI data centres are expected to lead, with infrastructure revenues forecasted to hit $331 billion. *—ANI*

Slower check-ins, longer queues amid IndiGo outage

Passengers fume as airline works on 'system slowdown'

MUMBAI, 5 OCT

Domestic carrier IndiGo on Saturday said it is facing a temporary system slowdown across its network, affecting its website and bookings. The airline also said this may result in slower check-ins and that it is working to restore the normalcy at the earliest. "We are currently experiencing a temporary system slowdown across our network, affecting our website and booking system. As a result, customers may face increased wait times, including slower check-ins and longer queues at the airport," IndiGo said in a travel advisory posted on X. It further said, "We are working diligently to restore stability and normalcy as quickly as possible." IndiGo operates over 2,000 flights, including international, per day.

Despite efforts to manage the situation, frustration continued to build among fliers *PHOTO: X*

The outage affected several critical systems, including IndiGo's website and booking system. Passengers took to social media to express their frustration. "It's good to invest in new aircraft, but how about improving the ground services," one user posted on X, reporting delays at Bangalore's Terminal 1. Another traveller remarked, "Airport looks like a railway station" due to the overwhelming crowds caused by the system failure.

In a statement, IndiGo acknowledged the issue, describing it as a "temporary system slowdown" that affected their network. "As a result, customers may face increased wait times, including slower check-ins and longer queues at the airport," the airline said. IndiGo also reassured passengers that their team was fully committed to restoring normalcy.

Despite efforts to manage the situation, frustration continued to build among fliers. One passenger reported a delay of more than an hour for a flight from Lucknow to Delhi, while others pointed out inconsistencies in flight availability when attempting to book online. *—PTI with Agencies*

TO SAVE $3B

Amazon likely to sack 14K managers by 2025: Report

VIRGINIA, 5 OCT

Amazon's plan to have fewer managers could result in huge job cuts of closely 14,000 managers and cost savings.

CEO Andy Jassy said last month that he wants to increase the ratio of individual contributors to managers by at least 15 per cent by the end of the first quarter of 2025. Having fewer managers will remove unnecessary organizational layers and help Amazon move faster without bureaucratic hurdles, Jassy added.

This effort could lead to the elimination of roughly 13,834 manager roles by early next year, resulting in cost savings of $2.1 billion to $3.6 billion, Morgan Stanley estimated in a note published.

The estimate assumes 7 per cent of Amazon's workforce is in management positions. As of the end of the second quarter of 2024, Amazon had approximately 105,770 total managers globally, and that would drop to 91,936 in the first quarter of next year, based on Morgan Stanley's estimate. Amazon doesn't publicly disclose a breakdown of its workforce.

Amazon said that it has "added a lot of managers" in recent years and "now is the right time" to make this change.

Every team within Amazon will review their structure, and it's "possible" that organizations may eliminate roles that are no longer required, the company said, adding that the change is about "strengthening our culture and organizations." It declined to comment on Morgan Stanley's specific projections. *—Agencies*

FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Pralhad Joshi to visit Germany to boost ties

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

Union Minister of New and Renewable Energy Pralhad Joshi will visit Germany to strengthen India's cooperation in the field of sustainable development and renewable energy, which begins on 6 October, the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy said on Saturday.

Pralhad Joshi *PHOTO: PTI*

During his three-day visit, he will attend the Hamburg Sustainability Conference from 7th - 8th October, and will also hold a series of bilateral meetings with Ministers of Germany, United Kingdom and other senior officials to boost cooperation in sustainable development, Green Hydrogen, low-cost finance and the whole of renewable energy value chain components.

As per the statement, Joshi will also assert India's position on green shipping and the role of green hydrogen to decarbonise the mobility sector in the conference.

The visit will elevate India-Germany relations to create business opportunities and accelerate the expansion of renewable energy in India and worldwide. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has laid special emphasis on the India-Germany bilateral relations. Inter-Governmental Consultations between the leaders of India and Germany is scheduled in India in October this year. *—PTI*

Gold prices may correct by 5-7% before the next leg up: Oswal

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

The gold prices could see some consolidation near the recent highs, Motilal Oswal said in a report as its prices hit a fresh all-time high of Rs 78,450 (per 10 gram).

The wealth management firm says that the gold will see a correction ranging from 5 to 7 per cent as historically, it has never added gains of 32 per cent in any year since 2000. "We expect gold to correct by 5-7 per cent, before the next leg up," the report added.

As per the report, the US presidential election next month could add further spice to the market. The domestic exchange-traded fund (ETF), imports along with SPDR Holdings and CFTC positions are supporting the case for Bulls.

Citing major reasons behind the recent surge, the report mentions that in the 9 months of 2024, the US Federal Reserve's stance and geopolitical intentions have pushed the gold prices around the globe.

As per the report, the US presidential election next month could add further spice to the market *PHOTO: ANI*

As per the report of the firm, over the next 2 years, gold will hit the levels of Rs 86,000 (per 10 gram).

Gold prices are on an upward trajectory backed by firm demand, and the steam seems to remain till the end of this festival season.

Gold demand in India has remained robust, particularly following an initial surge after the import duty cut.

Indian gold exchange-traded funds (ETFs) have witnessed a surge in investor interest since the import duty cut and changes to long-term capital gains tax for gold ETFs were announced in the Union Budget. *—ANI*

Rupee will hover with positive bias: UBI Report

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

Analysts predict that the rupee will hover near current levels with a positive bias, supported by continued foreign portfolio investment (FPI) inflows and a generally weaker dollar, according to the Union Bank of India report.

However, escalating tensions in the Middle East may exert downward pressure on the rupee, especially if dollar outflows intensify amid geopolitical uncertainty, it said.

Technically, experts suggest that the rupee may find support at Rs83.76, with strong resistance around Rs83.99. A breach of these levels could push the currency to test Rs84.16, last seen in non-deliverable forward (NDF) markets.

The Indian rupee witnessed a boost in the last week of September, gaining approximately 0.66 per cent from its all-time low on September 12 (Rs83.99) to Rs83.4350. *—PTI*

Sept sees surge in IPO filing as 41 firms register

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

The month of September 2024 witnessed a remarkable surge in Initial Public Offering (IPO) activity, with 41 companies filing their IPO offer documents with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), according to Axis capital report.

This significant uptick includes major players like NTPC Green, Hexaware Technologies, Vikram Solar, Aditya Infotech, Varindera Construction, Vikran Engineering, and Mauri Tech. These filings highlight the growing confidence of companies across sectors in tapping the capital markets, signalling strong investor appetite and a robust IPO pipeline.

As of now, 67 companies have filed their Draft Red Herring Prospectus (DRHP) with SEBI and are awaiting clearance. In addition to this, one company is at the confidential or pre-filing stage of its DRHP.

Out of the 239 IPOs listed during this period, 175

PHOTO: PTI

opened above their issue price, 10 debuted at their issue price, and 33 listed below their issue price initially but later recovered to close above the issue price by September 30, 2024.

Investors were more inclined to sell shares that showed positive listing gains while holding onto those that listed at a loss. SEBI's policy interventions in April 2022, particularly those concerning Non-Institutional Investor (NII) share allotment processes and the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) guidelines on IPO financing by Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs), have had a significant impact. *—PTI*

Domestic road industry revenues to grow by 9%

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

The domestic road logistics industry is expected to register a growth of up to 9 per cent in revenues in the ongoing 2024-25 financial year, according to Icra.

The organised road logistics sector had witnessed a growth 4.6 per cent in the 2023-24 fiscal year, the ratings agency said in a report.

As per Icra, the industry logged a revenue of Rs 23,273 crore in FY24.

The agency further said it also maintains a stable outlook for the sector, fuelled by various government measures and policies in favour of the sector on expectations of good demand outlook from segments like e-commerce, FMCG, retail, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, and industrial goods.

Srikumar Krishnamurthy, Senior Vice President & Co-Group Head Corporate Ratings, Icra Ltd, said, "In FY24, the growth was subdued on account of a relatively muted demand amid high inflation. *—PTI*

Cement prices will be hiked as demand set to rise by 5%: Report

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

Cement demand is likely to grow by 5 per cent in FY25, and few more round of price hike by companies is expected in the coming months says a report by Centrum.

Multiple factors like delayed government spending post general election, more than normal monsoon and flooding across multiple locations in the country has impacted the demand adversely. On a year on year basis, the cement demand has contracted by 5-6 per cent, but with recent capacity expansion a growth of 2.7 per cent is expected.

"Demand across south, north and central region was weak with certain micro markets reporting more than 20 per cent YoY decline in demand. However, our recent channel check suggests that most participants expect a sharp improvement in demand in 2HFY25. We are building in 5 per cent demand growth for the sector for FY25," says the report.

The report adds that because of contraction in demand, Q2 FY25 saw a 1.5 per cent decline in prices of cement. Highest decline in prices was seen in the central region with 4 per cent QoQ fall. However eastern India experienced stable prices with marginal hike in September on a weak base.

A growth of 2.7% is expected in cement, according to Centrum *PHOTO: PTI*

Many cities saw lowest cement prices over the past 3-4 years in this quarter. But the report adds that the prices which continued to drop for last few months, with minor increase in August and September, will see it going up in coming months.

The report concludes that with demand revival and price hikes, the cement companies will come up with better earnings growth in remaining part of the year, H2FY25. *—ANI*

EXPANDING BUSINESS

Swiggy launches 'XL' fleet to cater bulk orders

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

IPO-bound food tech platform Swiggy on Saturday formally launched its bulk order 'XL' fleet to serve large orders in one go.

The launch comes hours after Swiggy announced it has started a 10-minute meals and beverages delivery service 'Bolt', currently operational in select cities.

The large order fleet, on a pilot run for the past few weeks, was formally launched on Saturday in Gurugram, on the day of Haryana Assembly elections.

"To commemorate its official launch, the Swiggy XL EV fleet delivered 3,500 meals to electoral officials at more than 580 polling booths in Gurugram and Badshahpur constituencies. This service was provided free of cost to the District Administration," Swiggy stated.

The launch comes hours after Swiggy announced it has started a 10 minute meals and beverages delivery *PHOTO: PTI*

Sidharth Bhakoo, National Business Head of Swiggy Food Marketplace said, the food delivery services are helping in the overall growth of the F&B sector in India by driving new consumption occasions, promoting supply proliferation and enabling expansion of consumer base.

"Food is also very closely associated with conviviality and mirth, so we are witnessing demand for bulk orders when families and friends get together. The festival season is perhaps the best time to launch this service, when there is gaiety and joy all around, and everyone celebrates with their loved ones. Swiggy XL will ensure that there is no interruption in parties and gatherings and no delay in large orders," he said.

A fleet of 20 Swiggy XL EVs delivered three meals- dinner on 4 October, Friday, and breakfast and lunch, on 5 October, Saturday. *—PTI*

Report: IT firms set for revenue growth of up to 2.5%

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

IT companies are poised for improved revenue performance, with sequential growth expected to range between 0.0 per cent and 2.5 per cent in USD terms for Tier 1 firms, in quarter of FY25, according to Centrum report.

This recovery is being driven by the ramp-up of recently signed deals and an enhanced TCV (Total Contract Value) to revenue conversion.

A significant factor bolstering this positive outlook is the reduction in deal leakages compared to FY24, signaling stronger operational momentum for the sector.

IT services companies are navigating a challenging landscape due to ongoing macroeconomic concerns in key markets such as the US and Europe.

However, early signs of recovery are visible, particularly in verticals like Banking, Financial Services and Insurance (BFSI), Technology, Media and Telecommunications (TMT), and Manufacturing.

The growth forecast includes 1.7 per cent for TCS, 2.5 per cent for Infosys, 1.0 per cent for HCL Tech, 0.0 per cent for Wipro, and 0.5 per cent for Tech Mahindra. The IT sector is also focusing on improving overall productivity, with particular attention to utilisation and operating margins. As IT companies gear up for Q3FY25, management commentary on the demand environment will be key focus. *—ANI*

PHOTO: PTI

Mayank faces fitness and form test

BENGALURU, 5 OCT

Pace sensation Mayank Yadav is expected to unleash his raw speed while the absence of India's T20 regulars will provide another opportunity to the fringe players in the three-match series against Bangladesh, beginning here Sunday.

Having consistently generated speed over 150kmph in his maiden IPL earlier this year, Mayank had drawn the attention of the cricketing world before a side strain ruled him out of the tournament. Usually, one has to prove fitness in domestic cricket to be considered for national selection but the 22-year-old has been fast-tracked into the side considering his special talent.

The series against Bangladesh will be a test of his fitness and temperament. It remains to be seen if he can display the same accuracy and control that he exhibited in the IPL.—*PTI*

PHOTO: TWITTER

Shubhankar, Om Prakash falter at Alfred Dunhill

ST. ANDREWS, 5 OCT

The first two rounds offered big disappointment for the Indians, as Shubhankar Sharma and Om Prakash Chouhan were placed tied 139 and 154 respectively in the Alfred Dunhill Links Championship.

Sharma shot even par rounds at Carnoustie and Kingsbarns but that saw him way down in tied 139th, while Chouhan was even further down with 71-75 and was at tied 154th. Sharma still has his round to go, while Chouhan will play his third round at Carnoustie.

Meanwhile, Nicolas Colsaerts relied on local knowledge as he shot a stunning 65 to share the lead with Cameron John after the second round. —*PTI*

India looks to regain fight in T20 game against Pak

India's run rate currently stands at a poor 2.99

DUBAI, 5 OCT

India will have to regroup quickly and iron out the imbalances in team combination when they face arch-rivals Pakistan in a crucial second group A match of the Women's T20 World Cup here on Sunday.

An early 58-run defeat to New Zealand on Friday has not just dented India's chances of entering the semifinals of the ICC showpiece, but it certainly has pushed them to a tight corner.

India's run rate currently stands at a poor 2.99 and it makes big victories mandatory for them in the remaining three matches against Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Australia.

The Harmanpreet Kaur-led side was wretched in all three departments of the game against the Kiwis in its World Cup opener, and India now needs a reversal within 24 hours. It's tough but that is the path they have to tread against Pakistan, high on confidence after beating a strong Sri Lanka in the first match on Thursday.

As a first step, India will have to sort out their combinations ahead of the Pakistan game. They went a batter light against New Zealand to accommodate an extra pacer in Arundhati Reddy and it meant a wholescale rejigging of the line-up.

India look to iron out combination flaws PHOTO: PTI

It forced the promotion of Harmanpreet to No. 3, Jemimah Rodrigues to No., 4 and Richa Ghosh to No.5, not the usual slots for these batters. For instance, Harmanpreet, who is a solid presence at No. 4, has never made a fifty in her previous 19 gigs at No.3 and to make her play precisely at that position in a World Cup was quixotic.

The inclusion of three pacers was not a wrong move in hindsight as there was no dew and the Kiwi's pacers made full use of a hard deck.

But India made a hash of their three-pronged pace attack move, giving just one over to Pooja Vastrakar, the third-best bowler in T20Is this year with 20 wickets from 16 matches.

Also, the decision to go with the pace troika cost India the presence of left-arm spinner Radha Yadav, their second most successful T20I bowler with 22 wickets from 13 matches. So, head coach Amol Muzumdar will need to take a long look at the combination as another defeat will seriously hamper India's chances of progressing to the last-four stage from Group A.

But stats apart, India, particularly batters, looked mentally frozen against the Kiwis, evidenced by the highest individual score in their innings – a 15 by Harmanpreet.

In that context, India might just think of adding Dayalan Hemalatha to bolster the batting. Though India has a head-to-head edge over Pakistan in T20Is, winning 12 out of 15 matches so far, they have the ammunition to stun any opposition.

Their bowling is especially formidable with the likes of experienced Nida Dhar, captain Fatima Sana, and Sadia Iqbal leading the pack. —*PTI*

TODAY'S MATCH

- India vs Pkistan
  Time: 3.30 pm
- Scotland vs WI
  Time: 7.30 pm

ICC WOMEN'S T20 WORLD CUP

KOTIAN CENTURY

Mumbai champion PHOTO: X / @BCCIDOMESTIC

Mumbai wins Irani Cup after 27 years

LUCKNOW, 5 OCT

Tanush Kotian's gritty unbeaten hundred laced Mumbai's 15th Irani Cup victory which was sealed by virtue of their first innings lead over the Rest Of India on the fifth and final day here on Saturday.

Mumbai's last Irani Cup victory came 27 years ago during the 1997-98 season and since then the domestic powerhouse appeared in eight more finals without success the last of which was in the 2015-16 season. Mumbai, who started the final day from overnight 153 for six, declared their second innings at 329 for eight for an overall lead of 450 runs.

Kotian, who scored 64 in the first innings and resumed his innings on 20, remained not out on 114 off 150 balls, hitting 10 fours and a six.

Knowing the futility of chasing 451 in little over a session, the Rest of India skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad shook hands with his opposite number Ajinkya Rahane, signaling the draw and victory for Mumbai, the defending Ranji Trophy champions, at the same time.

Kotian, who showed remarkable maturity to steer Mumbai innings after the early departure of Sarfaraz Khan (17) and Shardul Thakur (2), received good support from No. 10 Mohit Avasthi.

Brief scores: Mumbai: 537 all out and 329/8 declared in 78 overs (Tanush Kotian 114 not out, Mohit 51 not out, Prithvi Shaw 76; Saransh 6/121) drew Rest of India: 416 all out.—*PTI*

Defending champions Australia beat SL

SHARJAH, 5 OCT

Defending champions Australia overcame a mighty scare to eventually beat Sri Lanka by six wickets after pacer Megan Schutt's probing spell set them up for a small winning target in their women's T20 World Cup campaign opener here Saturday.

Set a paltry target of 94, Australia was 35/3 at the end of the power play, losing captain Alyssa Healy (4), Georgia Wareham (3), and Ellyse Perry (17) early in their run chase.

But, a 43-run partnership between Beth Mooney (43 not out) and Ashleigh Gardner (12) helped Australia go past the target with 34 balls to spare, as they made 94/4 in 14.2 overs. Opting to bat, Sri Lanka struggled big time with Nilakshika Silva top-scoring with 29 not out as they huffed and puffed their way to 93 for 7.

Australian players celebrate the wicket of Sri Lanka's captain Chamari during the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2024 match PHOTO: PTI

Sri Lanka could hit just four boundaries in the whole innings.

Schutt (3/12) also equaled South Africa's Shabnim Ismail's record scalp of 43 wickets across all editions of the T20 World Cup.

The Sri Lankans were 25/3 in the seventh over and 43/3 at the halfway stage, and they never recovered from there.

Brief Scores:
Sri Lanka: 93 for 7 in 20 overs (Nilakshika Silva 29 not out; Megan Schutt 3/12).

Australia: 94 for 4 in 14.2 overs (Beth Mooney 43 not out; Sugandika Kumari 1/16). —*PTI*

INDIA VS BANGLADESH 1ST T20

Expecting pitch to play slow: Bangladesh batter Towhid

GWALIOR, 5 OCT

Bangladesh middle-order batter Towhid Hridoy is expecting the pitch to play slow in the T20 series opener against India as both teams enter unknown territory with the Shrimant Madhavrao Stadium hosting its first international match on Sunday.

"Looking at the practice wicket, I feel it is a slow pitch. In such wickets having a high-scoring game is very less. No IPL match has also happened here," said Hridoy.

Hridoy also stressed the team is here to win the series though it will miss the services of champion all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan, who recently retired from T20 and Test cricket."Pressure is always there, but if we think about that then we will not be able to perform well, our focus is always on process and how to perform.

Shakib bhai is not there, we will miss him but everyone has to go one day, we are hopeful we will be able to beat them," said the 23-year-old.

Organizers on war footing to get the stadium ready for international debut

While the field of play is ready in the newly-built facility, organizers are making a last-gasp attempt to give finishing touches to the work going in the stands and around the stadium.

Security beefed up

Ahead of the T20I contest between India and Bangladesh in Gwalior on Sunday, police have beefed up security in the city and at the venue, Madhavrao Scindia Stadium, officials said on Sunday.

Prohibitory orders have already been clamped in the city and over 2,500 policemen have been deployed to keep the match incident-free, they said.

Cops will be on the streets from 2 pm on Sunday. They will be on duty till spectators reach home after the day-night game is over, police said.

The Match starts at 7.00 PM IST. —*PTI*

Debutant scores, Augsburg beat Borussia 2-1

AUGSBURG, 5 OCT

Substitute Alexis Claude-Maurice scored on his Augsburg debut to help clinch a 2-1 victory over Borussia Moenchengladbach in the Bundesliga. Augsburg scored in each half on Friday night to get back to winning ways after two consecutive defeats. It leapfrogged Moenchengladbach into 11th on the table. A volley from Keven Schlotterbeck six minutes before halftime gave the home side the lead and Claude-Maurice scored eight minutes after coming on as a substitute to double the lead. Tim Kleindienst's powerful header in the 72nd pulled Moenchengladbach back into contention but the goals from Augsburg's two recent signings proved enough. —*PTI*

Zverev wins Shanghai opener against Bellucci

NAPLES, 5 OCT

Wrapping up the star-studded lineup on Stadium Court on Saturday, Alexander Zverev got his 2024 Rolex Shanghai Masters campaign off to a successful start. The German registered a comfortable 6-4, 6-2 win over Italian qualifier Mattia Bellucci in the pair's first Lexus ATP Head2Head meeting to advance to the third round. After withdrawing from the China Open last week, the 27-year-old notched his first victory in Shanghai since 2019 in one hour and 36 minutes. Last year, he lost to Roman Safiullin in straight sets in his opening match. The No. 3 player will face either Jordan Thompson.—*AP*

Rethin and Vaidehi win National tennis crowns

CHENNAI, 5 OCT

Rethin Pranav battled bouts of cramps to score an incredible 6-4, 2-6, 6-2 victory over Nitin Kumar Sinha to clinch the men's title in the Fenesta National tennis championship at the DLTA Complex here on Saturday.

The 17-year-old Rethin, who trains in Chennai these days, was remarkably composed in battling a tough situation when he was drained of energy, to the extent that Nitin was toying with him midway.

Rethin looked to have regained energy with every sip of water as he kept hydrating himself, even between points, and called the shots in the clutch moments, much to the discomfiture of Nitin.

Vaidehi Chaudhari, the champion of 2022 and the runner-up last year to Shrivalli Bhamidipaty, was far too fluent and consistent as she led 6-3, 5-0 before Maaya could get a grip on the proceedings.

Super Saturday: Rethin and Vaidehi reign supreme PHOTO: NTI

The champion's cheque of Rs. 3,00,000 apart, it was indeed a fairy tale in Indian tennis, as Rethin had made the main draw as a lucky loser. After he had lost the third and final qualifying round to Bhicky Sagolshem, winning four games. —*PTI*

Jota's early goal gives Liverpool a 1-0 win

LONDON, 5 OCT

Diogo Jota was on target as Liverpool secured top spot in the Premier League heading into the international break with a 1-0 victory at Crystal Palace. The Portuguese striker marked his 100th start for The Reds across all competitions with a poacher's finish from Cody Gakpo's pullback on nine minutes. Liverpool were utterly dominant and Jota should have doubled their tally past the half hour but missed his kick from Ryan Gravenberch's perfect pass.

The Merseysiders continued to boss proceedings in the second half but Jota and Mo Salah missed gilt-edged chances leading to a tense finale when goalkeeper Alisson went off with an injury late on.Viteslav Jaros took to the field for his competitive debut but Palace could not find the opening to snatch a share of the spoils. The Eagles felt they should have been awarded a penalty but Virgil van Dijk's pull on Marc Guehi went unpunished.

Diogo Jota's goal secures victory for league leaders Liverpool PHOTO: X / @LIVERPOOLFC

The result sees Liverpool move four points clear at the summit ahead of the rest of the weekend's action.Palace are still winless after seven matches and remain in the bottom three.

Liverpool are next in action following the international break when they entertain Chelsea at Anfield. Crystal Palace visit Nottingham Forest. It was always going to be a tough task for Palace if they wanted to get their first win of the Premier League season against high-flying Liverpool, though you could not fault the fans for having hope after beating the Reds at Anfield towards the end of last season. —*AP*

ASIAN YOUTH ARCHERY

India bag silver in women's section

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

Promising archer Vaishnavi Pawar showed impressive presence of mind to help India clinch team silver in the recurve U-18 women's category at the 2024 Asian Youth Archery Championship in Chinese Taipei.

Vaishnavi took the first shot for the three-member Indian team, also comprising Pranjal Tholiya and Jannat, in every round and handled the pressure well as they pipped fancied South Korea in the semifinal in a shoot-off.

In the gold medal round, India found themselves in a similar situation, fighting back from a 2-4 deficit to force a shoot-off against Chinese Taipei, who ultimately prevailed.

Indian contingent for Asian Youth Archery Championship 2024 PHOTO: X / SAI

"I am incredibly proud to represent India alongside my teammates. Beating South Korea in the semifinals was a significant milestone for us," Vaishnavi said.

"Winning silver at the Asian Youth Archery Championship is a testament to our hard work and dedication, and it inspires me to aim even higher in the future." The Maharashtra archer finished fourth in the trials to make it to the Asian Youth Archery Championships and also reached the quarterfinals in the individual category.—*PTI*

Harmanpreet credits HIL for personal growth

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

National men's hockey team captain and ace drag-flicker Harmanpreet Singh, who has scored 205 goals in 234 international appearances, on Saturday credited the Hockey India League (HIL) for playing a pivotal role in his career development.

From being named the Upcoming Player of the Tournament in the 2017 HIL to becoming one of the world's top drag-flickers, it has been a tremendous journey for Harmanpreet who highlighted how the league has helped him grow after rubbing shoulders with some of the best international players.

"Hockey India League was a huge part of my development. The league provided me with a stage to enhance my skills by exposing me to different playing styles under different coaches," Harmanpreet said in a Hockey India (HI) release.

"Playing in a League, and sharing a dressing room with players from various countries opens up your mind and provides you with multiple perspectives and ways of thinking. —*PTI*